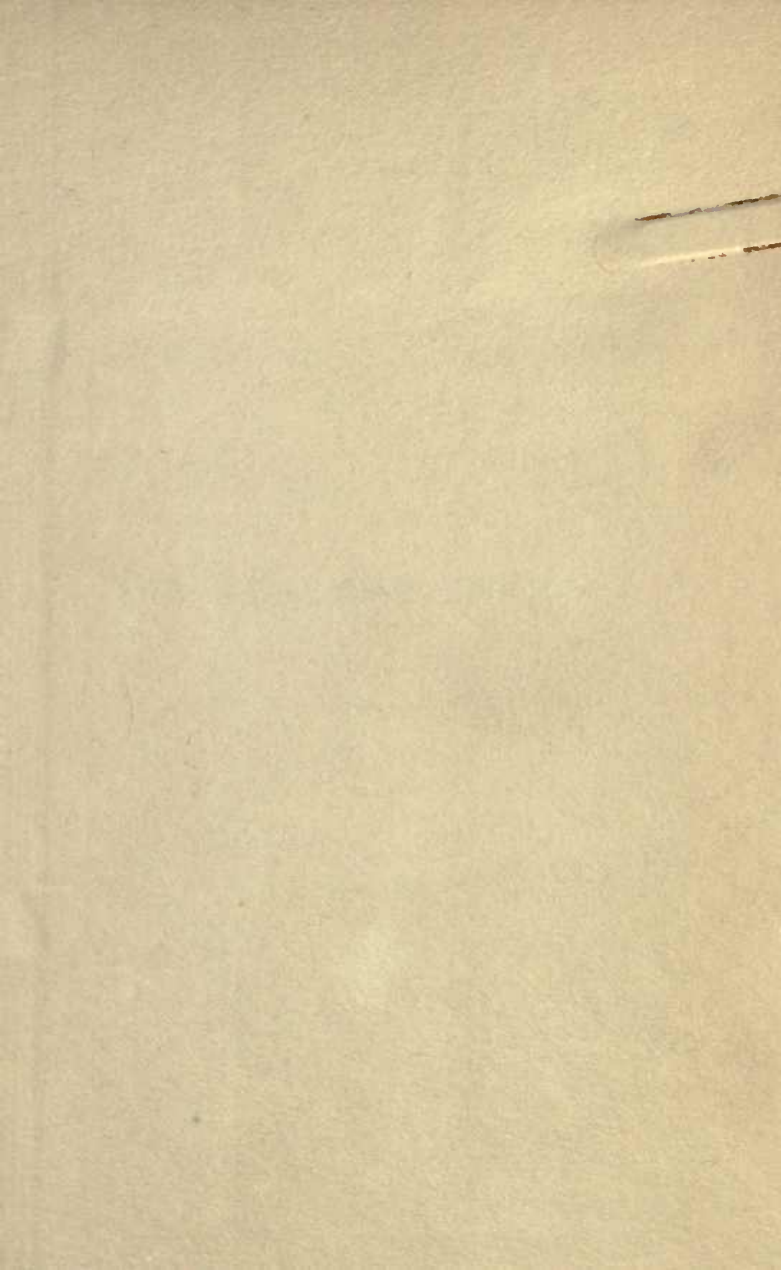


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THE HEALTHFUL SPIRIT

BY

HERBERT N. BATE, M.A.

VICAR OF S. STEPHEN'S, HAMPSTEAD

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY
THE BISHOP OF LONDON

LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.

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TO MY WIFE

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INTRODUCTION

THIS will be found to be a thoroughly sane and healthy book. It is healthy in its tone, in its teaching, and in the kind of inspiration that it gives to the reader.

(1) It is healthy in its tone.

Some religious books are morbid and introspective, and while they make you feel that religion is necessary, they do not attract you to it. This book makes you feel what a happy thing it is to be a Christian. The writer clearly enjoys it himself; he enjoys it with his mind, as well as with his spirit; he feels that it makes him a happier man and a better citizen, and that the more of Christianity he has the happier man he will be and the better citizen.

To believe in Christ according to this book is to live the true man's life; to believe in the health-giving power of the Holy Spirit is to live in a land where the sun shines, and a glorious breeze blows along a moorland heath, and it is always a morning in Spring.

It reminds me of what one of the hardest workers in the diocese of London said to me after six months' continuous work from the 1st January to June 30th, when he went off for his summer holidays: "Good-bye, Bishop; it is like saying good-bye *after a party!*"

(2) But not only is it healthy in its tone, it is also singularly healthy in its *teaching*. Clearly and simply written as the book is, it touches on some of the gravest problems connected with religion.

The second chapter, on the simple gospel, is a helpful account of that central truth of the gospel, sometimes mistaken for the whole gospel, which we call the Atonement; then follow some excellent chapters on the part which the will, the mind, and the spirit must take in co-operation with the onrush of the spirit.

To me particularly attractive is the picture of the life-giving Powers, only waiting for the open window, to come in and take possession of the soul, and yet with it the insistence upon the 'great marvel,' that they should be there at all—a marvel constantly ignored by the ungrateful children of God. On the other hand, due warning is given of the forces on the other side: few will forget the warning that "*our body is a primitive savage given us to be redeemed and tamed to the service of the spirit,*

and still there is no telling where the barbarian will not break out and shame us."

The question how far we may fairly pray to be preserved from trial and temptation is well dealt with in another chapter, which concludes with the following passage :—

"From all such pressure of circumstance, such struggle or temptation, as may strain us beyond the breaking point, and leave us unable to play the man, we shall healthily wish to be delivered ; healthily, if at the back of the mind, at the base of all motives, is the desire 'cheerfully to accomplish those things that God would have done,' but morbidly, if there is any secret reserve behind the petition, and the ultimate motive is, after all, only to get through life with the minimum of discomfort. The healthy Christian will be keenly anxious to be at his best, efficient, alert, and cheerful, and will pray to be kept efficient, knowing quite well that the service required of him may after all be a service of suffering. So an engine, fitted and ready for the road, if it had a voice, might profess such faith as this : 'I believe that I have been put together for a good use, for efficient quiet working, and to turn fuel into energy, to go fast and well. I may be wrong : perhaps the idea is that I shall be laid aside, or used for experiments, or work at half-speed, or fight my way along bad roads

in bad weather, meeting all kinds of unbearable strain. Anyhow, I hope they will give me at least enough oil and fuel to enable me to try my best, and what is beyond that may be left to some one else to look after.' ”

Christian Science again is fairly and truly contrasted with the true gospel teaching in the following words :—

“ In like manner the principles of Mrs. Eddy's teacher and disciples in relation to disease and pain, though in the elect they may and do produce a high serenity and healthy peace of mind, tend always to exhibit lower results when brought into contact with common humanity. The world's sin is too heavy to be lifted by those who have no better gospel than to declare it unreal : nor as a matter of fact have they ever attempted to lift it : their gospel differs radically from the Christian in that there is nothing at the heart of it for the poor : its apostles are not driven by its spirit to seek and to save that which was lost, nor have they anything to offer them. For this reason, if for no other, their creed tends to produce in ordinary minds a certain callousness, an atrophy of the power of sympathy. The Christian, who knows that disease is as real as health, pain as real as pleasure—convinced though he may be that the reality of all these things is but relative—is more

likely to love and help his suffering neighbours than he to whom health and pleasure are real, but pain and disease are a monstrous and culpable illusion."

(3) But of course the real test of a book on religion is what it inspires you to do when you have read it, and I cannot sum up what it seems to me to inspire any man or woman who understands it to do, better than by quoting the heading of one of the chapters, called "Back to Health."

It inspires you whether you are anæmic or in the dark or in the low-lying valleys, or are doing nothing to come back to health, to come back to 'God's blessed breezes,' into which you mount when you pray, to find again in happy communions 'the hidden manna,' to work out cheerfully your own salvation, for it is God which worketh in you all the time, and to throw yourself without counting the cost into a life of selfless service for others, for so only will the 'Healthful Spirit' have you at His disposal for a life of joy which never ends.

A. F. LONDON.

Feast of the Epiphany, 1910.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
I. GREAT MARVELS	1
II. THE SIMPLE GOSPEL	15
III. BACK TO HEALTH	36
IV. THE HEALTHY WILL	54
V. THE HEALTHY MIND	73
VI. BODY OR ESTATE	91
VII. THE CITIZEN	110
VIII. THE HOUSEHOLD OF GOD	124
IX. THE CONTINUAL DEW	148

THE HEALTHFUL SPIRIT

I

GREAT MARVELS

Almighty and everlasting God, who alone workest great marvels ; send down upon our Bishops, and Curates, and all congregations committed to their charge, the healthful spirit of thy grace.

THE prayer which has suggested the leading idea of this little book is not a prayer for the Clergy. It is a prayer for all and each of us, in the body to which we belong, and in our several stations. The substance of it served various purposes in prayer books older than our own. It was used as a prayer for an abbot and his monks, or for the members of a household : and now the petition is daily offered for us all, with those who are commissioned to care and work for us, that we may receive the "healthful spirit" and "continual dew" of grace and blessing. This ought to be remembered and it is often forgotten : and it is a great pity that this little family prayer for our individual and corporate well-being should be narrowed down by inadvertence.

That the prayer has also given rise to misunderstandings is clear from the fact that at almost every revision of the Prayer Book some proposal has been made to alter its wording. A committee of the House of Lords in 1641 wished to change the phrase "who alone workest great marvels," and Bishop Cosin prepared a complete revision of the collect, offering to meet Puritan objectors by substituting either "who didst pour out upon thy Apostles the great and marvellous gift of the Holy Ghost," or "from whom all spiritual graces do proceed." In the American Prayer Book the sentence is altered after the latter pattern. We, however, adhere to the old form, the equivalent of "qui facis mirabilia solus," and we do well. The framer of this petition showed a deeper knowledge, both of human nature and of divine grace, than his critics. He meant to pray for strength and health and a constant renewal of perseverance, and he was not so superficial as to suppose that these were commonplace things. He thought rightly that life was a hard business, and his own power a poor thing to rely on: he did not believe that he could fight his way through unaided. He would lift up his eyes to the hills, from whence help should come: he wanted miracles to happen, and he prayed for them. So his mind turned instinctively to the Psalm of deliverance: *Thou art great, and doest wondrous things: thou art God alone. Teach me thy way, O Lord, and I will walk in thy truth:*

O knit my heart unto thee, that I may fear thy Name. Was his instinct wrong? Or are we right in thinking that miracles are unnecessary, that grace is all natural, that goodness simply grows, that soundness of will and freshness of energy are no marvels, and had better be prayed for as obvious fruits of the commonplace? Heine, one is told, when near his latter end, said, "*le bon Dieu me pardonnera : c'est son métier*"—"God will forgive me, that is what He is for"—screening himself, I suppose, from inquisitive intrusion by the tremendous irony. *C'est son métier*—does the irony represent, not too unjustly, some popular and easygoing views of the grace of God? Are we to dismiss the working of the Spirit of health among clergy and people from the class of wonderful things? Is the function of the Giver of life restricted to things normal and ordinary? Or does not the truth lie in the opposite direction? The working of the will of God is always wonderful, in grace or in nature: and the co-operation of His will with ours is the most wonderful thing that the imagination can picture; it is absolutely mysterious, leaving us still free and yet with a freedom enriched by dependence on Him; it is strictly miraculous, making the weak strong, the suffering happy, and bringing life to the dead. If with all this it is perfectly natural, that is the most wonderful thing of all. So our Lord taught us to pray, as this collect prays, for the Holy Spirit, with all the naturalness of

a child asking for its dinner : but we do not learn from Him to ignore the awfulness and the perpetual wonder of the gift.

It is just possible, by a stretch of imagination, to conceive what a human life would be like (if such a thing were possible) in which the grace of God had absolutely no part : if God dealt with one man after the fashion in which the Deists used to think He dealt with the world, creating him and then leaving him to himself. Such an existence, judged by the standard of true manhood, would be a misshapen and monstrous thing. It would pass across the world's stage as a mere physical and economic process ; growing to maturity and sinking into decay as something other than animal and yet less than human. Such a man would consume and enjoy, compete and acquire, feel desires and satisfy them ; but he would never be more than a "finished and finite clod, untroubled by a spark" ; he would never know that unrest which comes from "having a foot in two worlds." He would never be haunted by a better self nor driven upward by remorse ; he could never measure himself against a higher standard than that of expediency ; in the whole world of the spirit he would be more than a stranger, because always less than a pilgrim. Yet he would be human or quasi-human : only his humanity would be entirely stunted by being kept in isolation from the power which coming as from without makes men real men and

works "great marvels" with the raw material of our nature.

In actual life, although monstrous lives are lived and moral deformity abounds, there is no such thing as absolute insulation from God. He enters His world by so many doors : wherever good is, in however foul a place, He is there, and there is no good thought or word or feeling which is not traceable to Him. What we call the natural order, and the normal morality of men, show reflections, sometimes clear and sometimes distorted, of the Divine light. *In Him we live and move and have our being*, whether we know Him or not : and the more a man knows of Him the more he will see of Him both in the external world and in the world of personal life, in other people. As the artist's eye sees colour where the layman sees none, so the saint sees the heavenly where the lower mind sees only the commonplace, and refers every ray of light that he sees to the Father of lights.

Every being in human shape is of God's family, not disinherited : a child of God in the making, played upon by forces far beyond his power to measure or understand ; real humanity, true manhood, is not brought into being except by "great marvels" : it does not come into the world by accident. We grow up under the stress of physical forces into maturity, but growing into maturity is not necessarily the same thing as becoming a man.

Rather, humanity at all ages is only the stuff out of which a very wonderful thing may be made or a wonderful possibility spoiled—quite literally, a possibility of the miraculous. A misleading proverb says that poets are born, not made: men are certainly made, not born, and they have to be re-born before they can begin to be made. We need not look an inch beyond ourselves to see whether this is true. We have our bundle of faculties, propensities and tastes, some developed and others immature. We have had, all our lives long, the business of choosing which part of our mingled inheritance shall have full play and which should be repressed. And out of the sum of our choices for good and evil there emerges what we call our character, which is in almost every one such a medley that the most ordinary person is a strange creature, sure to disappoint expectation. It is a true saying that "there is no such thing as the average man"; it is also true that at whatever point we look into our own average selves we find, even in the tidiest of our pigeon-holes, never anything better than a chance that ought to have been better employed, a bit of self that always has a better, unrealized self far beyond it.

O broken life, O wretched bits of being,
Unrhythmic, patched, the even with the odd !

We have been given a little seed plot of personality

to turn into a garden, and it is very little like a garden as yet : our body is a primitive savage given us to be redeemed and tamed to the service of the spirit, and still there is no telling where the barbarian will not break out and shame us : our mind, that should be at least clear and clean, as serviceable as its capacity permits, is warped here and there by wilfulness, and but little fitted by our use of it to be an instrument for learning the "love of the Lord our God" : our will, conformed though it may be in some degree to the good will, has its known and unknown breaking-points, or bends too easily along familiar lines of least resistance. And below all those elements of ourselves upon which we can reckon, there are the submerged depths, related we know not how to our conscious life : not altogether outside the reach of responsibility, played upon and moulded at least in part by what we consciously do, and yet ready to reveal, when occasion arises, quite unsuspected powers and limitations, any of which may have a hand in the development of the self that is to be. We are rudiments indeed.

Yet this is obviously far from being the ugliest side of the truth. If nothing worse ailed us than being immature, we might cheerfully look to the mere lapse of time to redeem our deficiencies. But the lapse of time would, and, indeed, does, disappoint us. The faults of middle life are different from those of adolescence, but they are both duller and less ex-

cusable. Character will often set, if left to itself, without really ripening. Even the creed which we seem to hold more easily when the revulsions of earlier doubt are over may be a poor and passive thing, less vital by far than the troubled searchings which once kept us at least hungry and thirsty for the truth. There were many middle-aged people, one may presume, in Jerusalem when it was said, *I will search Jerusalem with candles, and I will punish the men that are settled on their lees, that say in their heart, The Lord will not do good, neither will He do evil.* What is wrong with us is not that we are not old enough, but that we have interfered with our own growth by our own fault. It would be a relief to be able to shift the responsibility backward, as due to a vicious inheritance, or forward, as merely waiting for the certain promise of the future; but conscience is awkward and stubborn, and tells us that "each of us has been the Adam of his own soul." The doctrine of the Fall and original sin stops short altogether of providing the least excuse for any of our sins: while it makes it easy for us to make allowance for others, it never lifts any weight off our own conscience. And similarly the doctrine of evolution, while it illuminates the history of our race, does not provide us with any ground for thinking light-heartedly of our own future. We shall not realize our best possibilities just by going on living.

Biologists tell us of a process which is asserted to

be as important in the natural world as that of progressive evolution : it is that by which a whole species sinks instead of rising in the scale, becomes adapted to less varied and less complex conditions of life, and degenerates. Any new set of conditions occurring to an animal which render its food and safety very easily attained seem to lead, it is said, to degeneration : the habit of parasitism clearly acting upon animal organization in this way. "Let the parasitic life once be secured, and away go legs, jaws, eyes, and ears ; the active, highly-gifted crab or insect may become a mere sac, absorbing nourishment and laying eggs." Often, it would appear, the members of a degenerate species recapitulate in their growth the downward career of the tribe : so the barnacle, in its early youth an active swimmer of complex structure, "fixes its head in middle life to a piece of wood and takes to a perfectly fixed immobile state of life. Its organs sink into atrophy one by one ; it follows its ancestors down the path of degeneracy."

The barnacle has no choice whether its development shall be upward or downward : other species in the natural world have had no choice but to move upward. But man has long passed the point at which his progress was a necessary result of the play of blind forces. He has to choose deliberately which path he will take. It is easy for him to degenerate, and he can, if he will, recapitulate in his life story the

phases of degeneracy exhibited by decaying races. But if he is to develop real manhood he must choose even more deliberately, seeing what he would become, working out his salvation with fear and trembling, and allying himself with the power that can bring out of him the best that it is in him to be. *Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way.*

Neither happy accident nor lapse of time makes lives that are worth living, but the healthful spirit of God's grace alone. And for this we are born. The true definition of manhood is not to be found in books of physiology or economics; it is found in the Gospel of Jesus Christ; or rather, when physiology and economics have finished saying all the true things they have to say about us, there remains a greater truth unsaid which concerns us far more seriously, and it is this, that we are meant to be children of God; and every faculty and department of our nature is capable of being redeemed into unison with Him. We are not the slaves of our temperaments, we are not doomed to go on as we are; there is a remedy for just our own particular form of moral or spiritual incompetence and wilfulness. "Lord," we can say, "if thou wilt, thou canst make something of me." The leper said, *Thou canst make me clean*, and it was true. *I will, be thou clean.* Let him serve as a parable, the parable of a life warped and cramped and maimed, yet not extinct, and therefore not hopeless of change

for the better: very far from health, and conscious of impotence; and by that sense of need and pain driven to ask for a great marvel from the healthful Spirit of Jesus of Nazareth. The little life cries out to the greater life, and opens its doors for the incoming of a power beyond itself, and is made whole, put straight, declared clean; so that henceforward the vital energy which has been wasting itself in morbid growths is set free for the making of healthy flesh and blood. The parable holds good for every human soul.

After all, the strongest if not the only justification of the whole fabric of religion is to be sought here. "Those without" have a perfect right to ask what we mean by our hymns and prayers, our emotions and our professions, and to challenge us to show reasonable practical ground for our Churchmanship. It is no doubt a disconcerting challenge, because we know that the truth about ourselves as we are is not likely to be the best commendation of the ideal to which we assent: yet we ought to be able to meet it; and ultimately we can only meet it by saying that we believe in a threefold miracle—the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost. We cannot justify the Church on any lower ground. Its wisdom as a guide of life, its art of ordered worship, its use of emotion and enthusiasm are all radically unsound if the principle which lies behind them all is not true and does not

work. But it does work, and we ought to be able to show it in working. Let us frame the answer thus : I go to church and pray for a variety of reasons, some of which have to do with historical facts and beliefs, but chiefly because I am sure that, poor as my life is, it would be far poorer without what I gain there, with and through the brotherhood. There is an influence of God, a divine alliance, call it what you like, which makes duty easier, temptation more bearable, the dullness of routine work more tolerable ; there is something there which makes it possible for me to face the past without hopeless remorse, and the future without fear. The Bible, the prayers, and the sacraments all bring to me the same thing through different channels, and our name for it is the grace of God in Christ. I have tried other ways, and they will not work. When I used to appeal to my own strength of character, my self-respect, my energy, I did not find that they saved me from myself ; they were not to be relied on when they were most wanted, and I came near to thinking that it was no good to have an ideal at all. And now at least I know better, and I have tested what I know by failure and success ; I have failed God, but He has never failed me. This was the kind of "apology" which helped to win the Pagan world in the early centuries. No doubt the evidence of prophecy and the lofty spirituality of the Old Testament told strongly on men's minds, but what told far more

strongly was the fact that Christianity made a difference to people in life and death; it supplied a practical ability to do the next thing well which neither Paganism nor philosophy could give; it seemed and was miraculous. Men had seen austerity before, and had heard high moral precepts, but the combination of chastity with serene cheerfulness, and the transformation of sinners into saints, were novel, and could not be explained away. Here was a stream of power, descending as from some high reservoir among the hills, no stagnant pool, but living water with power in it to refresh and purify. The second and third centuries of the Church's life, great epochs of intensive and extensive growth, often strangely misjudged as periods of degeneration, would have been impossible if the heart of the Church had lost its sense of wonder, or forgotten the perpetual miracle of grace. But we forget it all too easily, and expecting little, enjoy the poor beatitude of not being disappointed.

Lent is a time for reconsideration, remembrance, repentance and repair: and one of the best things that can happen to us through these processes is that we should rediscover simple truths. We are not often in danger of being unable to respond to the stimulus of what is novel: but it is hard always to remember the rudiments of the Gospel in such a way that they shall move us and we answer to them. Our mind, like our will, is always needing to go

back and *do the first works* over again. Here, then, is something easy to remember and still easier to forget. What we want is the healthful spirit of God's grace working great marvels ; we need nothing more, but we also need nothing less.

II

THE SIMPLE GOSPEL

Almighty God, who hast given us thy only-begotten Son to take our nature upon him, and to be born of a pure Virgin ; Grant that we being regenerate, and made thy children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by thy Holy Spirit.

Almighty and everlasting God, who, of thy tender love towards mankind, hast sent thy Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ, to take upon him our flesh, and to suffer death upon the cross, that all mankind should follow the example of his great humility ; Mercifully grant, that we may both follow the example of his patience, and also be made partakers of his resurrection.

RELIGION is simple. The door of the Kingdom of Heaven is open to those who, through a "change of mind," become like little children. It is like many other doors which any one can shut, but only one key will open. Religion can be made impossible in a thousand ways: by things we are responsible for, such as wilful disobedience to God, voluntary impurity of heart, or insincerity ; and by things for which we are not immediately responsible, such as mental perplexities, which may easily be a salutary part of our pilgrimage. But there is only one thing that can make it possible, keep it alive, carry on its growth, or bring it back to health when it has lost vitality. It is too simple to be put into

words. We call it grace, or life imparted, or God Himself dwelling in us: and these are only metaphors describing from one angle or another the thing which the heart knows, and wants to find or regain. Life at the heart of my life: my inmost real self quite open to God, as a vessel for Him to fill: God in me, myself lost and found in God: in tune with Him, in contact with Him, dependent on Him, at peace, at one with Him: and He *my light and my salvation . . . the strength of my life*. So in endless symbols we may represent the one simple need which religion expresses. *Thou, O Lord God, art the thing that I long for*. And to this need our Faith is the answer. It is the "creed of creeds," because it completely meets the inmost want that men can feel. At the very heart of humanity there is a "divine discontent": a hope beyond our power to realize, a dissatisfaction which of our own selves we cannot allay. In the Faith we find that which answers to it. As the eye is made for light, the ear for sound, and hunger for food, so we, the unsatisfied, are made for *the fulness of God*. If a man knows, even in a very small degree, what this means: *I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me*, he has found the key, he knows the child's doorway into the Kingdom of Heaven. He will not then be satisfied, will not count himself to have been apprehended, but will rather say, as St. Augustine did, "I have tasted, and I hunger and thirst": but that hunger and thirst

is not morbid or miserable, like the emptiness of the starving; it is rather hopeful and healthy, a beatitude belongs to it.

Religion is simple. The healthy soul has simple wants: and he who wants nothing is not healthy. Loss of appetite is not a good symptom, either in the physical or in the spiritual world. In the spiritual world it leads to all kinds of complaints: inability to say our prayers, heartlessness in worship, and depression are some of them: and from these flow others, for our nature abhors a vacuum and will fill up life somehow, and so selfishness and sensuality get their chance when we are not preoccupied with things that are worth living for. Therefore the way back to health is not so easily found by merely casting out the devils—though that is part of the healing process—as by a revival of the simple healthy desire for the friendship of God. If that returns, you may thank God and take courage: you will be able to pray somehow, whether in words or without words, if only you want contact with God; and then everything else will revive in its order.

The heart of the Creed is simple too. Every point in it comes back to one central principle: it all converges on one simple Gospel for the whole man: there is a *pearl of great price* hid, yet discoverable, in the field: hid in the field of human experience, hid in the complexities of Christian teaching, and discoverable there by the simple-

minded. I know that in the Creed considered as an intellectual structure there is much that is difficult, and the difficulties ought not to be underrated : but they are difficulties of explanation, of terminology, of theory : and the Christian life is so far independent of them that even the cleverest technical theologian will admit that the secret of that life is not at all difficult or complicated. Electricity will light our houses, if we treat it properly, even though our notions about the nature of electricity are absurd : flowers will grow in our gardens whether we understand botany or not : a little common sense about gardening and the management of lamps and wires will put at our disposal forces far too mysterious for us to understand, and the same is true of deeper forces still.

Let us look, however, a little more closely at one or two cardinal points in our belief, in order to see, if we may, how they do converge into one simple Gospel.

We believe in the story of the life and teaching of our Lord as the Gospels narrate it. What is the value, the working value, let us say, of that story? It has two values, both of which are real, though one is incomparably higher than the other. First, it enables us to *know Christ after the flesh*. We who read the Gospels are the better for the bare knowledge of the record. Palestine is our holy land, and we are pilgrims. We stand on the

hill-side or by the lake among the hearers, and watch the working of wisdom and love, of pity and righteous anger, and what we see and hear supplies us with a standard by which the world of men and things may be measured. Even if we never get further than distant admiration and respect for the words and acts of Jesus of Nazareth, we are the better for knowing that they were done and said. This is the primary justification for Bible teaching in schools. The child who has learnt the Sermon on the Mount possesses a knowledge which may indeed lie dormant, but will probably in no case be altogether without result, and may one day come to real life. No other knowledge that you can put into him is so likely to bear good fruit. There is a fair chance that even in the routine of Bible learning he is storing up good memories, beautiful images, deep down in his sub-conscious self: one day these things may return to him as his own and be recognized as familiar friends. And so a little fraction of the work of an evangelist is being done wherever the Gospels are taught.

For ourselves there is presumably small danger of our thinking lightly of the knowledge of Christ after the flesh. St. Paul, who said, *even though I have known Him . . . yet know I Him now no more*, did not mean to disparage it. His letters are saturated with the teaching, and rest upon the acts of our Lord. For us these things are the indis-

pensable groundwork of the Faith; as they formed the first volume of the evangelist's gift to Theophilus, so we begin with *the things which Jesus began to do and to teach*: they give us the atmosphere in which the Gospel can live and work, and trace for us the outlines of the Kingdom of God.

Yet so long as we dwell on those tales of the past as mere past history we have not found their full value. We see in them a supreme Artist at His work, in the art of human life, wielding our tools, using our material, and bringing out of it a perfect result. But watching a real artist at his work is apt to discourage the amateur. He sees a painter drawing with precision and freedom, simple and strong in his method and yet true to the "multitudinousness of Nature": it throws new light for him upon the capacity of human fingers to build up form out of formlessness, but he will be quite apt to say "This is so amazing that I shall never try to draw again." The mere reader might put aside the Gospels in a similar spirit. The disciple takes them differently. For him they do not belong to the past, but to the present. Christian people have never from the beginning thought of Jesus as a figure in the past. He was as real and as near to His friends when the last of the *eye-witnesses and ministers of the word* was dead as He had been in Galilee seventy years before. To them, as to all disciples ever since, He was not the faultless artist merely, a perfect pattern whose

creative power was handed down by memory as the standard of ideal beauty: we must frame another image if we would figure to ourselves what they found in Him. Imagine a musician, in love with his art and longing for adequate power to express himself and create the beauty that his mind conceives. From loneliness and apparent failure he is translated into a place in a great orchestra. For a time he is chilled by nervousness, and plays mechanically. Little by little, however, he comes to life. All around him, working insensibly upon heart and brain and fingers, is the magnetism of the fellowship of the others: and in every beat and bar he feels the strengthening compelling force of the conductor's mind and will. The conductor, the interpreter of the music, lives in his musicians, draws out of them something better than their best: and even their mistakes are trivial so long as they are with him in spirit to the utmost; it is his music that they are making, not their own. So Jesus Christ has always been the living interpreter of the "heavenly music," able to breathe into the brotherhood the power to play their part and play it true.

I borrow from a modern historian¹ words which express this better than I can express it myself. "What was written in the Gospels of the life and death of Jesus, might by now be ancient history, if

¹ T. R. Glover, *The Conflict of Religion in the Early Roman Empire*, p. 139 f.

the Gospels had told the whole story; and they neither were, nor are, the source of the Christian movement, great as their influence is and has been. The Jesus who has impressed Himself upon mankind is not a character, however strong and beautiful, that is to be read about in a book. Before the Gospels were written, men spoke of the 'Spirit of Jesus' as an active force amongst them. We may criticise their phrase and psychology as we like, but they were speaking of something they knew, something they had seen and felt, and it is that 'something' which changed the course of history. Jesus lives for us in the pages of the Gospels, but we are not His followers on that account, or even the Christians of the first century. They, like ourselves, followed Him under the invisible attraction of His character repeating itself in the lives of men and women whom they knew. 'The Son of God,' they said, 'revealed Himself in man,' and it was true." "The Son of God reveals Himself in man": that was what practical people said, recording and interpreting an experience which was as real and obvious as the most commonplace realities are: that is what they still say, and it is precisely what the Creed says. *He for us men and for our salvation came down from Heaven; came, and comes, for us men, one by one, and not with a vague desire to benefit mankind in the abstract; for our salvation, that is, to heal us and complete us, with a definite purpose directed at each*

individual in the race. Our business is to point this at ourselves. *Thou art the man.* What Creeds say in general terms remains ineffective until it is realized by individuals. We must believe in ourselves. Our imagination is so dull that it seems easier to believe in the importance of things than in that of persons. A bit of matter, we can believe, has its own place in the scheme of things: that it should be destroyed is inconceivable: whereas one human person seems too insignificant to count for anything. But the Gospel will not let us say, *I will hide myself from the Lord: shall any remember me from above? I shall not be remembered among so many people; for what is my soul among such an infinite number of creatures?* It teaches, on the contrary, this quite simple and quite marvellous lesson: you matter so much to God that the Son of God is revealed in man for you: to make your life worth living, to take it into Himself and give it back to you *more abundantly*. For this

The Word had breath, and wrought
With human hands the creed of creeds.

The Gospel of Christmas then, and the inner meaning of the human life of Jesus, is the Divine answer to our plainest and deepest want. It is so plain that the plainest things are chosen to be its symbols: bread, and light, and a road. Every one knows what hunger and darkness, and losing one's

way, are like. Hungry people do not want theories of nutrition: the benighted do not want instruction in optics: the lost do not ask for principles of geography. Edible food, visible light, and a way that leads somewhere, are the primary needs: he who gives these gives enough, saves from imminent peril, and helps where help is needed most. So He who is the Bread and the Light and the Road saves us by giving Himself.

Again, we believe in the Cross. No Christian doubts at all, however vague his explanation of the fact may be, that the death of Jesus Christ is somehow at the root of our faith. It could not be cut out without affecting all the rest. Our Saviour is the Man of Sorrows, and the Cross is His sign. The Cross is stamped upon all that He said and did. Its shadow—or shall we say its light?—lay upon His childhood, and upon every day of the ministry. It supplies the only terms in which we can describe Him, whether as teacher or physician. *He Himself bore our infirmities, and came not to be ministered unto but to minister, and to give His life.* It is the absolute symbol of life given, of self laid down, consecrating itself for the sake of others. It has become, as it were, a part of the very name of Jesus: and this Gospel is *the word of the Cross*.

And yet when the mind is asked for a plain account of what it means, it is found to be extremely hard, if not impossible, to define. The Creed, surely

with extraordinary wisdom, says very little : it says just what every one feels to be true, in whatever way he may choose to expound its truth : *and was crucified also for us*. Even the Quicunque Vult adds no more. *Who suffered*, it says, *for our salvation*. There the voice of authority leaves us : and there the work of speculation begins, building upon Biblical texts, and upon more abstract foundations, such complex edifices and schemes of salvation that the simple-minded may well wonder whether the real mind of God towards us could ever be so intricate as men's interpretation of it has been. It is indeed not safe, especially at the present time, to think slightly of those who have tried to work out a Christian doctrine of Atonement which can satisfy the mind as well as the conscience and the heart. If they have failed, or reached at best but a fraction of the truth, it is because the mystery of the Cross is inexhaustible. Our metaphors and analogies carry us only a little way, and then break down. Our theories supply us with a little light, but the light in which God views the world's tragedy is in its fulness inaccessible. The mystery cannot all be fathomed : and yet all our efforts to measure it, in so far as they are really faithful, converge and meet in a truth which is simpler far than theology, and nearer to life.

Each great age of Christian thinking, when confronted with the *problem* of the Cross, seems to have

fastened upon one aspect of religion, one figure of the relation between man and God, and striven to show how this has been perfectly realized in the Lord's death. So, first, the men of the Apostolic age, nurtured under the shadow—or in the half-light—of the Jewish Temple, brought to the study of the Christian revelation minds steeped and saturated in a religion of sacrifice. For them the oblation of burnt-offerings, peace-offerings, and sin-offerings, imperfect though it might be in itself, and unacceptable apart from the oblation of the worshipper's real self, represented the highest level which man could reach, under the old dispensation, in his approach to God. All their traditions, all their religious imagery, were drawn from this source: it coloured and penetrated their minds to a degree which an imagination can hardly grasp. There was then ample reason why, even apart from prophetic passages prefiguring the sacrificial sufferings of the Servant of Jehovah, minds so trained should turn to the ritual of sacrifice to interpret for them the dying of the Lord. *He was led as a lamb to the slaughter*—there was the fact: so He did die; and He Himself had used of Himself the language of sacrifice. *My blood*, He had said, is *shed*, or rather *poured out*, as though it were poured round an altar and sprinkled upon the worshippers, *the blood of a new covenant* or dispensation. What wonder was it that St. Paul could say, *Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us*, or that the writer

of the Epistle to the Hebrews could see in Jesus Christ the ideal Priest, the perfect Victim, offering in Divine completeness the one availing sacrifice of which the many offerings of earthly priests had been but the pale and ineffectual shadow? As long as our Faith, and our Lord at its centre, are studied in the light of that lower faith from which it sprang, so long the language of sacrifice will endure as expressing at least a part, and possibly the profoundest part, of the meaning of that *end* to which His love *endured* for us.

Again, in later times, while building still upon the doctrine of sacrificial atonement as the New Testament shadows it forth, men turned to the thought of God as the supreme Judge. Mankind, they conceived, stands over against Him in a legal relation. As He is the Lawgiver, and man is under law, so the Christian revelation must provide an ideal solution of the tragic legal necessity which is set up by human sin. Law is inexorable, and sin involves punishment. As in the state, the demand of civil righteousness involves the lawbreaker in the obligation of bearing the penal equivalent of his transgression, so in the greater State where God is King, the whole race of men is under the obligation of bearing a penal doom. Guilty by inheritance, culpable by individual transgression, it must, if God be righteous, suffer an endless and yet an endlessly insufficient penalty. Yet God is as essentially

merciful as He is essentially just : how then can His mercy find expression, and His love an outlet for its energy, without violating His justice? If there is no one who can stand in the sinner's place and bear his sentence, the dilemma must be insoluble. But the Cross solves it once and for all : substituting for the guilty an innocent victim : one who as Son of Man can represent the humanity which in Him alone is found in ideal perfection. Here again the attempt is made to find in the Cross the perfect satisfaction of a religious necessity which human experience cannot fully meet ; the earthly citizen cannot be satisfied with a God who is less righteous or less good than the ideal king and judge : and in so far as this solution points away from an insufficiency towards God and His sufficiency, dealing honestly with the abiding consequences of sin, refusing to leave us to our own resources, and throwing us on the mercy of God, it is true to at least a portion of the mystery of redemption.

Once more, a third line of explanatory metaphor was suggested to our great Anselm by the thought of the infinitude of sin. Let it be imagined that a man, fully conscious of his due subjection to the Will of God, is offered the possession of all created and all imaginable things, if only he will disobey that Will in the lightest conceivable particular act—one glance of the eyes against the Will of God. He cannot but own that no imagin-

able compensation could outweigh the guilt of the smallest imaginable sin. Therefore all sin is of infinite guilt, and all sinners incur, in every sinful act, a debt which is immeasurable. They owe already to God all that they have and are and do, and when they withhold this, they multiply their debt beyond any possibility of payment. Moreover, they are not only debtors, but debtors who add contumely to their indebtedness. In an earthly court they would have to pay a creditor not only the amount wrongfully withheld, but also a compensation for the outrage done in withholding it. When, in the light of such analogies, the whole mass of human guilt is considered, how unthinkably vast does the whole amount become! And what being can thought conceive of, whose dignity and worth are so infinite that any act or gift of his could avail to wipe it out? The honour of God must be vindicated: it does not befit Him that the vast disorder of this unpaid balance should mar the order of His kingdom. But is there any being who can pay back to God "something greater than all which is outside God"? and if there be, could the Divine justice accept it from him unless he were human, paying as man the human debt? God and man, God made man, could alone satisfy the awful condition: and the life of the Son of God made flesh, will be, and will alone be, adequate as a satisfaction. It is adequate, for the sinless life owes no unpaid debt to God, and is of

infinite value in itself: and the pain which it suffers must of necessity win from God a just recompense, a recompense which the Son cannot enjoy for Himself, since He possesses all things and is in need of no remission on His own account: He will, therefore, give it to those for whose sake He became man. Such, in bare outline, was the august structure of Anselm's speculation: probably the greatest purely abstract theory of redemption that has ever been formulated. Its value can only be fully appreciated by those who realize the comparative baseness of the current teaching which it was designed to supplant, in which the Atonement was explained by the monstrous fiction of a ransom paid to the Devil for souls legitimately his due; but it has left its imprint upon Christian thought in the word *satisfaction*, employed in the Consecration Prayer of our own Communion office; and it will never lose its impressiveness as the monument of a mind and conscience which felt, as few have felt, the crushing reality of sin and the need of an infinite Redeemer.

I have, however, alluded to these three types of thought about the Cross of Christ for a special purpose. They are widely different: and it would be easy to adduce many more as far diverging from these as they diverge from one another. Yet in the end they converge, and all thought about the Atonement converges, when it passes from the sphere of theory to that of application, and comes

close to the reality of life. It would not be hard to show how inadequate each explanation, each metaphor, is in itself, and the point at which it breaks down. But let us rather consider how each leads on to something better and simpler than itself. One man welcomes the thought of sacrifice and propitiation. But is it enough for him that the Sacrifice has been offered? The great poem of the heavenly High Priest speaks indeed of one who *entered in once for all into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption*; but it does not stop at that point; it goes on to say, *let us draw near . . . having boldness to enter*. It speaks of the *blood of Jesus* as effectual, as effecting something which *the blood of bulls and goats* was powerless to effect: but by the *blood of Jesus* it means an offered life which can cleanse the lives on which it is *sprinkled*; it proclaims, as the true gospel of sacrifice, living union with Christ in the *power of an endless life*. Not the spectacle of a dead Christ, but communion with Him who *is alive and was dead*; not the objective fact of something done for us, but the inward reality of something given to us; not the memory of Christ crucified, but the presence of the Spirit of Jesus, is the full fruit of the offering on Calvary. The spectacle, the objective fact, the memory, are as it were the opening of a great door: but the door is opened that men may go through it: Jesus is *lifted up* that He may *draw all men unto Him*.

Again, if there are those to whom the idea of a vast redemptive transaction is welcome, the satisfaction of our infinite debt, or the bearing of our punishment by an accepted substitute, they will find that these analogies lead in the end along the same simple road. Doubtless the man has learned much who has found, by means of such pictures that he has not to save himself: *it cost more to redeem their souls*; he is of a race which God loves, with a love that will suffer all things rather than abandon its purpose, a race which by reason of the love of God may hope, and stand erect, and not fear. But life is individual. The race may be freed from its debt, acquitted of its guilt: yet the man's problem remains, to live the forgiven life. It is as nothing to him that there has been a great act of reconciliation unless that act continues, making and keeping peace between him and God. It is as nothing to him that God should "impute righteousness" to the guilty, unless He also imparts to the weak the power to live. So just at the point where speculation is completed and experience begins, he comes back from the difficult paths of abstract theory to the simplicity of his personal need. *Thou, O Lord God, art the thing that I long for.*

It may indeed be reckoned as one of the chief duties which Christian thought in our time is called upon to fulfil, that we should study the whole circle of Christian teaching in the light of personality. The

attempt to fulfil it has scarcely begun as yet, although in almost every part of theology it is sorely needed, and in some directions—for instance, in questions dealing with the Sacramental idea—it would surely tend towards a general peace and the allaying of old and outworn disputes. But in relation to the idea of Atonement, it would seem as if some little progress were already being made. More and more it is being realized that by the Atonement, in its fulness, we must mean the whole redeeming process, begun in time when *the Word was made flesh*, and continuing through all the ages of human history. *God is in Christ reconciling the world to Himself; is, and not merely was.* That process began with a great act of manifested love: Jesus lived the life of sacrifice and died the death of sacrifice for us; *so God loved the world.* He lived and died, He lives undying, to save us, by giving us life in Himself, and so making us at one with God. The great initial act remains, as an objective fact of history, for a perpetual assurance that there can be no obstacle on God's side to hinder our forgiveness and return to Him. *The handwriting that was against us is blotted out.* The Cross remains, as it were, planted high in our midst, as the truest revelation of what God is: and revealing God to us reveals also ourselves, bearing witness of sin, and righteousness, and judgment. But it is more to us than the sign of things that happened long ago: it is the assurance that He who bore it is with us still

is on our side, and having *begun a good work in us, will complete it.*

To most men of our time there is something wholly uncongenial in the idea of any vast transaction contrived by God for the benefit of our race in the abstract. Schemes of propitiation which are to affect merely the status of humanity in general leave us cold, and seem unreal. It is not probable that this is due to a fault which ought to be corrected, a culpable dislike to abstract thinking: I would rather say that it is due to a genuine desire for reality in religion. We need, and how many men, now untouched by religion, will welcome, a teaching which will work, and prove itself in action, and lead us into life, and help us to live. Life is personal and individual. Humanity is not an abstraction but a stream of living persons: if it is "all mass to the human eye," it must be "all individual to the Divine." The Atonement which our hearts demand must be personal in its operation, bringing men one by one out of sin and into union with God and one another. The thinking mind, looking backward along the ages of history, and viewing the story of redemption as a whole, will not fail to bow before the mystery of the *eternal purpose*: but the needs of life will not be satisfied by thought alone; life cries out for life, our simple need for simple aid, our failing wills for *God with us*. So we are driven on to seek in the Gospel of the Cross a personal power: and what we seek is there to be

found. There is no reason why we should stand gazing at the Cross in bewilderment, and wondering in what unfathomable way it can bring us into atonement with God: the way is not bewildering but plain. The Atonement is not already past: it is going forward here and now, as men receive the Spirit of Jesus, feed on Him in their hearts by faith, and learn to live as sons and brothers in the fellowship of His Kingdom. To all perplexities about the Cross the living Church can return the simple answer of its daily experience: *the life is made plain, and we have seen and bear witness: that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you also, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ. The Life is made plain* to those who are

Day by day with strength supplied
Through the Life of Him who died.

They are pupils in the school of Atonement: fitful, it may be, and forgetful in their learning, and yet little by little they are being brought into oneness with God. Christ imparts to them both His power and His secret: the power that comes from feeding on the "Living Bread," and the secret that life is a plain road for those who travel it in His Spirit, a King's highway of the holy Cross.

III

BACK TO HEALTH

Grant, we beseech thee, merciful Lord, to thy faithful people pardon and peace, that they may be cleansed from all their sins, and serve thee with a quiet mind.

DID ye receive the Holy Ghost when ye believed?
St. Paul found at Ephesus certain disciples, students of Christianity, and there was something about them which prompted the question.

There was something, too, in what St. Paul saw everywhere, as the normal energy of the new life, which made this the most obvious question to ask anybody, though in hundreds of faces he could read the answer visibly written. The presence of Jesus in the world through His Spirit was the most obvious of facts. It was not the development of a beautiful idea, not the legacy of a profound teacher, alone. It was a new creation. *He spake, and they were made, He commanded, and they were created.* Others had built Utopias: Jesus had said there was to be power, and there was power. It needed, it admitted of no explanation but one. It could not be explained away, as an exceptional excitement, stirring the depths of personality and issuing in a kind of

collective mania. Such things happen, but they pass off, and this did not pass off. A revivalist, working upon the mysterious undercurrents of our nature, will evoke nerve-storms, and bring out of the depths things unpredictable, both good and bad, and for the most part transitory. This was different. It went forward like a forest fire, only that where fire leaves death, this left life, life individual and life corporate: and so, as St. Paul went about the world, he found a new reality everywhere. It was as though a Divine power had touched everywhere a barren yet expectant soil. The Church was constituted by, and brought forth in great plenty, the *fruits of the Spirit*. Here they were stirring, striking, masterful, shown in acts of leadership, construction, interpretation; there they were of a more homely excellence, in love, joy, peace, purity, and patience. It was the birth of a new humanity: in its strength it met the challenge of Gamaliel, for it was of God, and men were not able to overthrow it; in its depth it solved the question of Pilate, as men came to the truth and by the truth were made free.

When he believed, this new energy had come to St. Paul himself. *It pleased God*, he says, *to reveal His Son in me*. *He was not disobedient to the heavenly vision*. In the old life he had hewn out his way for himself, had advanced in the religion of his birth as far as it could take him, had put all his powers of zeal and understanding at its service. Now he be-

came another man, and drew all his energy from another source. He had gained infinitely more than a new creed. The Spirit taught him where to go, what to do, and how to pray. The Spirit in the Church gave him his mission, and separated him for it. The Spirit of Jesus guided him along the high-roads of the Roman world, deferred the evangelizing of Asia, reserved that of Bithynia for others, and drew him on by visions to the West. He preached everywhere what he found in himself, the power of life imparted : and what he found in himself he found and expected to find reproduced in others. In every variety of character or circumstance he looked to see the faith bearing the same fruit, and he was not disappointed. Barnabas the landowner, Aquila and Priscilla, practical business people, Apollos the man of learning, were all one in this. Even in the less satisfying Galatians the same thing was found : they possessed the gift which they were in danger of misunderstanding : they had *received the Spirit*, and had much to lose.

The history of St. Paul's mind, as the Epistles reveal it, is the story of a deepening apprehension of the Spirit of Jesus in himself and in the Church. A man of rare intensity, passionately loving, sensitive and strong-willed, he had more to bear from the perversity of people and things than men of slower heart and tougher nerves. Yet in spite of harassing troubles, and the incessant friction set up

by the reluctance of average humanity to rise to the level of his high hopes, his central conviction steadily gained in depth. More and more he came to see in the Church the home of something normal yet marvellous, gifts quite supernatural, and yet to the Christian as obvious as nature, sent down to equip holy persons for the work of mutual service. He could have spoken of the Spirit in the Church as Coleridge wrote of the stars in the sky, "that still sojourn, yet still move onward": "everywhere," he might have said, "the Church belongs to Him, and is His appointed rest and His own natural home, which He enters unannounced as a Lord that is certainly expected, and yet there is a silent joy at His arrival."

The twelve disciples at Ephesus had not learnt the secret of the faith. They stood in the outer court of the living temple, prepared by their acceptance of the Baptist's discipline to join the brotherhood within, but it was obvious that they had not entered as yet. *We have not so much as heard whether the Holy Spirit is given.* They had begun their progress, however, by taking the right path. Hearing and answering the simple call of John the Forerunner to repentance and cleansing, they were of those to whom our Lord would not refuse to show by what authority both He and His Church were acting. They needed nothing but to go straight forward. Christ stood ready for them.

Did ye receive the Holy Ghost when ye believed? The question comes to us in different tones, and we cannot give it the same simple answer. It is put, it is worth putting, to Churchmen of every type and all ages, to boys and girls confirmed last year, and to steady, middle-aged people who have settled deep down into the grooves of routine. The possible answers are many: but none of us stand where the Ephesian disciples did. We have all heard that a Holy Spirit is given, and been baptized into a greater baptism than that of John. What we have ever understood by it, whether it has ever meant very much, whether it means anything now, are further questions. But it is plain that no Churchman can avoid the original challenge. This gift is of the very essence of Christianity. *Hereby know we that we are in Him through the Spirit that He hath given us.* If in the Church God is not at work, creating, re-creating, guiding, strengthening, the Church is nothing. And *if any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His.* To evade the question is to reduce the whole faith to a dead formula. And if this be the essence of Christianity, to draw thus from a Divine store of aid, and to lean in Divinely given dependence upon God Himself, honesty compels us to ask, What have we done with this great marvel, where are its obvious results, how does it prove itself genuine? *Did we receive?* The first impulse of many a man would be to dismiss the question as an

uneasy business, probably connected with a kind of religion to which he has never felt himself drawn. But on second thoughts, on a deeper view, it is seen to be well worth asking, and susceptible of a definite answer.

The answer is, Yes. Whether one looks back at the greater occasions of life, solemnities of self-dedication like the days on which one was confirmed or ordained, or at the less striking yet not less vital moments when through sorrow or repentance a secret spring has been touched and the door of faith has swung back for us on its hinges, we have received the Holy Spirit again and again. We have known a deeper life than our own. We have felt the wheels of our own little life in gear, as it were, with the driving power outside ourselves. And each knows how much more than this he is able to say. The chart of each life is too individual to make it possible to draw a general diagram. One man will answer, Yes, to the great question, thinking of the many grave and wilful lapses by which his contact with God has been broken, and the wholly undeserved generosity by which it has been knit up again. Another will recall the days of trust and inspiration whose light has died down, untended, till

At length the man perceives it die away
And fade into the light of common day.

A third will remember a definite time when he parted

company with the presence of God, moved out of the reach of His discipline, and chose to let Him alone. Many who live in the practice of an habitual religion, praying and receiving Holy Communion, can acknowledge sincerely how much they have taken and do take of God, and would yet give anything to recover the freshness and simplicity of days when they were more really in tune with Him than they are now. We have all received the Holy Spirit, and St. Paul, were he here now, would look to find in us all the signs of health—love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, a coveting of the best gifts, and a serene following of the *more excellent way*.

Yet "there is no health in us," or at best a health which is partial or intermittent: and health is the one thing needful. The way back to health will differ indeed according to the disease; but whether the whole life is radically wrong, utterly spoilt through lust or pride, or whether it is just languid, dull, ineffective, and out of training, the one thing needful is the same: one thing alone is worthy of our desire, one question alone cries out for an answer: how to get back to true well-being. How can we find our way to a condition which in the life of spirit and will shall be really like what perfect health is in the body, when the muscles are both firm and elastic, the nerves steady, and the eye clear?

The first answer is, that it is more than useless to

be content with a partial cure and to fix the attention on symptoms. Either go to the root of the matter or leave it alone. It is not commonly of much avail to tinker the character by means of minor good resolutions. A good doctor may appear to be treating symptoms, but that is not what he is really after. He wants to give the vital force in the patient a chance to assert itself, to build itself up from within, by assimilating healthy food, by exercise, air, and sunshine. Health is not a partial symptom to be looked for in this organ or that ; it results from the life of the body as a whole. And our spiritual ills cry out for cure, not for alleviation. Minor good resolutions are like false charity, which gives doles to the poor for pity's sake, and yet will not try to cure the causes of poverty. Our poverty needs radical healing.

Further, a real recovery is possible, and is within our reach, and that for two opposite reasons. On the one hand, if the fire of life is burning low, and its spark is hidden beneath a heap of ashes which can never catch fire again, it is we who piled the ashes up and we who can rake them out so as to let in the clear draught once more. We are responsible, not our circumstances, nor any mysterious accidents outside our own control, but our own choice or negligence in things done, said, thought, or desired. We ourselves, and not any mysterious or unaccountable force outside us—however strong the spiritual

currents may be which act upon us from without—have been the “masters of our fate.” Life lies within the grasp of our own deliberate choice. On the other hand, God is strong. Do not think of Him as an abstract something far away. Claim to hold, and hold more deeply than the Psalmist could grasp it, the robust and vigorous creed—*the Lord, my strength, my Saviour, my God, and my might in whom I will trust, my buckler, the horn also of my salvation and my refuge.* The very barriers which you have erected against Him He is ready to demolish if you wish them away. More than this, He is beforehand with you. Herein is religion, so we may paraphrase St. John, not that we want God, but that He wants us. The redeeming power is knocking at your door for admittance. So it is true, however mysterious, that the very grace of turning and change of mind by which we move to meet Him is His gift, *it is God that worketh in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure.* What we seem to begin He was working at before we started, just as the turning of the plant towards the sun is itself the effect of the sunlight. *Turn thou us, O God, and so shall we be turned.*

What then, supposing a man to be honestly hungering for a renewal of life, can he and must he do? Not every one in such a case will need any guidance. Some natures will feel themselves drawn back to God as by a magnet. They will experience

the uprising within themselves of a stream of spiritual force so powerful that the thought of resistance will not even be suggested ; a "revulsion of the soul, a strong compunction in them wrought." They will ask no questions, will find God immediately near, and will experience, it may be violently and with agony, the renewal which they seek, and the simplicity of conscience which is reborn with such renewals will bring them unsought direction. Others will be led in different paths : less simple, it may be, in character or mind. They may lose themselves in byways, and never reach the heart of the matter at all. I write these next few pages chiefly for those, and they may be assumed to be a large class, who, while they dimly feel that their religion ought to be a better thing than it is, have never taken special pains to gain for it new vitality, and are chary of taking any such abnormal steps as may lead them out of their depth : standing with an unconcern which is really little but timorousness on the brink of an ocean which is dogmatically believed to be capable of upholding the swimmer, yet unready to commit themselves to a venture : believing in faith, but not yet believing up to the point of self-surrender.

Real self-knowledge, that grace of the moral judgment which is so hard to acquire, and which unaided nature rarely gives, is the first thing needful. I would rather say the desire for real self-knowledge, for in that kind of knowledge there are many stages

and degrees, and the perfection of it is reserved for the full-grown man in Christ. But even the beginnings of self-knowledge are sacred, for a man cannot begin truly to know himself without learning something of God that he has either never known or has forgotten: and conversely, the least growth in the knowledge of God brings with it a clearer knowledge of oneself. *Now mine eye seeth Thee*, said Job, *wherefore I abhor myself*. It should be remembered that the minutest catalogue of faults, the most accurate report of things done and said, will not of itself show us what we are. Pepys' diary exemplifies this with amazing clearness. It is impossible to imagine a more detailed record, or one in which good and evil and neutral things are narrated with a more ruthless impartiality: Pepys sets down the most sordid self-accusations in the same level tone in which he describes his wife's last new dress; and yet the whole diary is but a shorthand account of a character in which self-knowledge has almost no place. It is as though he were an auctioneer's clerk cataloguing the contents of a house; the lots are numbered and classified with a cold eye to their market value; of the human value, the associations which make each trifle dear and sacred to the owner, no account is taken.

The man who would know himself must read his own story in a fresh light, anxious to know what wound he has inflicted upon his better self, what chances he has missed of pure and kindly living,

how he has wilfully withheld from God the reasonable, holy, and living sacrifice of himself, soul and body. He must be haunted by the remembrance of the love and law of God. He will need to invoke the healthful spirit of candour and good judgment that he may recall, not indeed the whole past, which would be simply intolerable, but just so much of the past as goes to make up his real burden. Ordinary people do not need to be warned against morbid introspection ; their temptations lie quite in the opposite line ; yet such morbidness is not infrequent, and the best antidote against this on the one side, and, on the other, against a casual and a superficial self-judgment, is to be found in simple readiness to follow honestly where the Spirit leads. He who is teachable and tractable, wisely passive under Divine instruction, is sure to find out about himself all that it is good for him to know.

Upon self-knowledge confession follows as by a natural law. It is true that ideally, or rather in a deeply real sense, repentance and forgiveness are absolutely simultaneous. We cannot picture God as waiting and withholding Himself until the human act of contrition is formally complete. We know that as soon as the will is turned to Him the essential thing has happened both on His side and on ours : we are free. But God is eternal, and His acts are timeless : we are in time, and move step by step. "As necessarily as prayer tends to embody itself in

utterance, and requires utterance for its due development, so necessarily does contrition require confession and the deeds of penance—not merely such deeds as are due already by a thousand titles, but deeds done more abundantly and diligently to redeem the time that is lost by past sin and negligence.”¹ We are taught that God will *forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us*, and just as a breach between man and man is only healed when faults are admitted, by acts of reparation, and not merely by good intentions, so it is a true instinct which leads and compels us to express our desire for reunion with God by acts of honest self-condemnation. It is an instinct, and can find no other satisfaction than this: *while I held my tongue, my bones consumed away through my daily complaining*; it is a true instinct, and experience ratifies its impulses: *if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins*. It is an instinct which it is dangerous to resist and good to foster. *Be not ashamed concerning thy soul, for there is a shame that bringeth sin, and there is a shame which is glory and grace. Be not ashamed to make confession of thy sins, and force not the current of the river.*

I would add one consideration out of many which point us toward taking this simple, childlike and natural view of our relation to God, as children who should cultivate frank and honest plain-speaking. It

¹ Tyrrell, *Lex Credendi*, p. 200.

may be urged that God already knows everything. If He is omniscient, why should we weary Him with the sordid catalogue of our misdoings, and steep our memory afresh in things which we want to forget and put behind us? Will not a healthy religion refuse to be troubled over-much with the remembrance of evil, and devote itself to practical sanity instead?

The question is really a common one, and deserves to be met. The answer is twofold. First, it should be remembered that our Lord taught us to pray, and taught us almost in the same breath that our Heavenly Father knoweth what things we have need of. The abstract idea of omniscience is not to hinder us from consecrating our needs by telling them to God.

Again, there is a true sense in which the Divine omniscience is limited. God cannot know us fully unless we wish to know Him and that He should know us. Human knowledge of human people, which is the only image given us by which we can even faintly conceive of Divine, is only possible by mutual consent. Consider the natural process by which an acquaintance grows up. Casual conversation begets interest and the interchange of ideas, and as friendship begins to develop, mind is opened to mind: freely and by consent the two friends enter into each other's circle of interests, and penetrate each other's world. But if one shuts him-

self up behind a barrier of reserve, refuses to be known, withdraws into himself, he can bar the other out absolutely : he can only be truly known so far as he wills to be known : he can be as impenetrable as he wills. There is, indeed, a knowledge of character from without which any shrewd spectator can acquire, reading people, as he will say, like a book. But true personal knowledge is not external : it is not analogous to the knowing of facts. In the world of facts only one will is required, the will to know ; facts offer no resistance, they neither welcome nor repel the inquiring mind ; the world of knowledge lies passive, ready to be explored by all who approach it. With men it is not so. He alone is really knowable who gives out all his best to be known, and wills that another shall enter into his life : and such knowledge involves both sympathy and love : it is a mutual union of wills.

There is a sense, too, in which God is omniscient. *All things are naked and open before the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.* Yet when we come to think of the relation between the Father and His children as between living persons, we must not speak of mechanical knowledge then, as though we were specimens under a Divine microscope. It is in our power to hinder Him from completely knowing us : we can limit the character of His knowledge just as we can limit the action of His love. Here is the law which gives reasonableness to the act of con-

fession. We have done amiss: and God knows. But it makes all the difference if we voluntarily offer ourselves to be known and judged, giving Him the key of our heart, as it were, and not expecting Him to make entry there by compulsion: and the difference is not one of theory but of experience, as experience can testify. There is no way to inward peace so sure as that which follows the instinctive pressure of conscience up to the point at which the Divine judgment is welcomed and desired: *try me, O God, and seek the ground of my heart; prove me and examine my thoughts.*

So the ashes which choke the inward fire can be raked out, through self-knowledge and confession: the obstacles which bar the entry of the Spirit of health can be put away. The *very beginning* of health, as of wisdom, is the *desire for discipline*. Yet this is the crucial process which whole masses of our people in the Church of England habitually evade or neglect. It is the point of self-surrender to which they will not choose to advance: and we need not look any further if we would know the chief secret of spiritual stagnation or decadence. *Force not the current of the river*, said the wise man: with us it is almost as if the seemly compromise of our institutions had tamed its flow and reduced it to a series of quiet and all but motionless reaches. We have surely to learn that if we would have health once more, the obligation of a real moral discipline must

be effectively realized as binding upon all who profess the Name of Christ and avow their belief in His Spirit. The real mind of our Church is plain. Every one who owns its allegiance is bound, periodically and whenever occasion arises, to search and examine his own conscience—and that not lightly and after the manner of a dissembler—that he may be brought to a full trust in God's mercy and a quiet conscience. So far all must travel together. Then and not till then the ways divide. If the level of the general spiritual life were such that in actual reality so much of the road to health were travelled by all, there would be no room for any controversy about sacramental confession. The requirement of "further comfort or counsel" would possibly be felt more widely than it is; it would certainly be understood and frankly acknowledged on all sides that the variety of men's needs must call for a great variety of disciplinary practice. There are many, and will always be many, who find their peace by themselves, and ask for nothing more. There are others who need and will wisely seek for guidance. There are others still who are impelled by a strong sense of the dignity of the Christian brotherhood, from which they feel that transgression has isolated them, and they are unable to take their old place among the brothers till the commissioned minister of the brotherhood has given them the Father's message of reconciliation. In these differences of ideal and

practice there is no inherent difficulty, and there need be no danger. Danger only arises when the energy which should be spent in removing the defects of our own vision is dissipated in criticizing the discipline through which others find blessing.

The difference between two people, both of whom gain a true renewal of life, the one through sacramental confession, and the other without it, is a comparatively trivial thing: it is absolutely as nothing when compared with the difference between either of these and a third whose spiritual account is never made up at all. They take two roads which lead to the same place: he takes no road and arrives nowhere. To him the gift of the Spirit will become a fading and at the last an unwelcome memory: God's health will recede while he stands still. But the others have been through one stage in the great adventure, and emerge new-made. It is good for them that they have been in trouble. They are out of the horrible pit, the mire and clay: their feet are set upon the rock, and their goings ordered: there is a new song in their mouths. They have recovered something of the freshness of health: they look at God and man with a clearer eye. They are receivers of the Spirit once again, taken back as through John's baptism of repentance into life more abundant.

IV

THE HEALTHY WILL

Stir up, we beseech thee, O Lord, the wills of thy faithful people, that they, plenteously bringing forth the fruit of good works, may of thee be plenteously rewarded.

UP to this point we have been speaking of religion mainly from one side, as something given from above. We have been bold to say that it is a marvellous thing, a "great marvel"; a Divine power, and not merely a human aspiration: a real lift given to men by an energy outside themselves: a more than natural aid by which alone we can really come to full manhood, and not just an eccentricity of peculiar emotional dispositions. It is also wonderfully simple: so simple that in reality one can no more define it than one can define to a blind man what is meant by "red," and how red differs from blue. It is, at the heart, a personal relationship to God, a relation of vital dependence: and though its effects, both nearer and more remote, will show all the infinite variety to which differing characters and circumstances give rise, yet at the root it is just the same for every one. The saint the

penitent beginner, the deep thinker, the practical person, the born believer and the man who has to fight for belief, all in so far as they have the real thing in them, are simply in effective contact with God. You may harness religion to any kind of work, and it will do it, just as you may harness the electric current to all sorts of work—it will give light or heat or ventilation as you please: but it will do none of these things without the simple contact that completes the circuit. So religion is always the same simple matter, coming down from one source and on one condition always. We have said also that the purpose of all discipline in religion is to restore, to strengthen or to purify that contact which in so many easy and subtle ways may be lost or weakened: so that with new freshness and sincerity we may take and use the help that is ready for us *beyond all that we can ask or think*. On the side then of God, His power and gift, this is the point which I am urging: that religion is inspiration, the inflow of a simple, natural health-giving and yet marvellous gift: simple and natural both in itself and generally in its working; not taking a man out of himself into ecstatic states, nor superseding his personality, but bringing him rather to himself, completing and re-making his personality. It is a power which may work through violent change, as when Saul the persecutor succumbs at last to the long-continued and long-resisted goading of his new Master, or more equably and gradu-

ally, as when Simon becomes Cephas, or Boanerges ripens into the beloved disciple; but whether by violence or by stealth, where the spirit is, there is the Kingdom of God, and in the long run, there too is health, and freedom, and something deeper than happiness.

I would now go on to speak of the same thing from another aspect, considering what it is that God in the heart evokes from us: the healthful spirit viewed in the light of our response to His action, in health of spirit and life: the out-put of the healed and healthy will and mind. It is well to bear in mind, in this connection, the principle which guided St. Paul, as all the Epistles show, when he passed from doctrine to practice, from theory to conduct. In most of the Epistles, if not in all, there is an obvious point of transition. So in that to the Romans, he is occupied in the earlier chapters with tremendous themes—with free-will and fore-knowledge absolute, with the scheme of the world's history, and the place of Jew and Gentile in the scheme: he is hammering out a great series of intellectual conceptions, beating great problems into shape, creating a world of Christian thought. Then, in the twelfth chapter, he comes down to life, and draws, with touches of unerring certainty and strength, the picture of the Christian gentleman. It might be thought, by the casual reader, that this is a radically new topic, and that St. Paul had two distinct compartments in his mind,

one for theoretical, and the other for practical wisdom. This, however, is completely untrue. Creed and action are in St. Paul's mind as essential to each other as warp and woof. Taken apart, they are but threads : woven together they are a fabric, such as will stand wear and keep out wind and rain. There is no suggestion that morals come in as an appendix to faith, or that St. Paul feels, in the later chapters, that now he is giving people something which they can take hold of, which matters more to them than what he has said before. Quite on the contrary, Christian life, and the demeanour of the Christian gentleman, follow from the creed as an inevitable corollary ; the creed supplies the motive and the power, which alone can create the life, and, if it is allowed free course, can create nothing else but the *new creation* in Christ Jesus. And so, in the Romans, as elsewhere, the two aspects of religion are linked together by a bond which the true disciple of St. Paul will never forget. *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, your reasonable service. Therefore* is the key here, and *therefore* runs through all the rich complexity of the argument in the Ephesians, holding the whole together into a unity, and knitting the eternal purpose, the temporal acts of redemption, the Church and grace of the Redeemer, and the practical life of the redeemed, into one indissoluble fabric.

In this *therefore*, too, is the pattern which every Christian mind must try to reproduce, the law and logic of the genuine Christian life, which flows naturally and freely from truth believed and grace honestly accepted.

First, then, of the healthy will. We are accustomed to speak of strong wills with admiration, and of weak wills with contempt, and not without reason. Yet it is clear that a strong bad will is a far worse thing than a weak bad will in its effects, and even a weak good will is better than either. Strength of will then is not the only quality which matters. Unless the will possesses something else than strength, it is by no means admirable, and the stronger it becomes the more brutal and tyrannous is its behaviour. The fact is that apart from its *direction*, the kind of things which it grasps at, will is just neutral, neither good nor bad ; or rather, unless it is directed in a particular way, it is sure to do evil and be a curse both to its own possessor and to others. Will, in itself, is just the pushing force that insists on being, living, acting, thinking, at any cost : it must make a way for itself, realize itself, and gain its ends, no matter what sort of self it realizes and what kind of end it gains. It is no more good, in itself, and because of its pushing power, than a physical force, let us say the power in a motor-car, is good apart from the driver and his purposes. I find this truth illustrated with a horrible clearness in

Mr. Wells' wonderful book, *Tono-Bungay*. Whether this interpretation of the book is a correct one or not, I have no idea, but it appears to me to aim at exhibiting the utter unblestness of a life of energy without direction. The central figure of the book, or rather the two central figures, are men who gain and handle power without pity or scruple, one of them infatuated by his own magnitude and the hugeness of the forces which he has set in motion, the other standing by in cold blood, conscious of the blind folly of this purposeless warfare, and yet partly fascinated by its very brutality. The society in which such colossal fraud and unbridled competition are possible is shown to be moving, as fast as the individuals who compose it, towards self-destruction. Meanwhile, as if to exhibit mere will, brutally intelligent, in complete independence of any real direction, all pains are taken by the author to eliminate every element in life, every interest and motive which can lead men towards an ideal and a law. Religion is not merely neglected, it is excluded, as though by antiseptic precautions: I think it only appears in an attenuated and innocuous form, in the person of an unnecessary and unreal clergyman: from the main characters of the book, and from all influence on their lives, it is scientifically excluded, with the quite scientific result that every trace of unselfishness goes with it. Love appears on the scene, I think, three times: once

in the form of a wretched marriage, unredeemed by any effort to save it through sacrifice, once in the form of mere egoistic lust, and once in the form of a passion which seems as deep as life, and yet has no power to sweep away obstacles set up by the most commonplace selfishness. So the grim tale goes its way, and ends, as it is bound to end, in tragedy; and the final scene is its fitting epilogue, where the chief actor, travelling down river from London, sees in his journey the emblem of his own life and that of the society which has made such a life possible; it all travels fast, as borne by a strong stream outwards; but the sea to which it is moving is uncharted and unknown, nor is there any discoverable meaning in the journey.

It would be hard to concert a better attack on the brute force of will as a principle of social and individual life, or a more moving plea for ideals and direction. Indirectly, and I am sure quite unintentionally, Mr. Wells puts good heart into the Christian: for there is no point in his drama at which the tragic evil has not its root in deliberate aversion from the ideal of Jesus Christ, and no ingredient in its bitterness which would not find in Jesus Christ its true antidote. And while anything in the book which points in the Christian direction does so in spite of the writer's own conviction, it is still a strong protest against the delusion that there can be progress without ideals. The "Super-man," who tramples

on pity, follows nature in the extinction of the weaker, and cultivates strength for its own sake, is as detestable to Mr. Wells as he is to any of us.

And if will in itself and strength in itself are bound to be either neutral—as strength is in the lower animals—or positively evil, what is to be said of will guided or partly guided by morality?

The man who accepts the moral law is more of a man for accepting it, however feeble may be his efforts to conform to the law which he owns. He confesses a standard which is in a sense outside himself, in that he cannot alter or bend it: he owns its supremacy, and the more reluctant he is in particular cases to yield it obedience, the more inexorable does he feel its decrees to be. He is not alone in the world, nor free to seek power for power's sake: he is part of a moral order, judged and self-judging, he is immersed in an ocean whose currents, however he resists them, sweep on towards righteousness. Yet if will in itself is brutish, will touched by morality is pathetic or even tragic, a splendid failure: it is Prometheus bound. The more clearly the good emerges into view, the further it seems to be from the reach of human hands: the deeper a man's conviction of righteousness, the more pitiful is his own failure, and the failure of society to attain it. And the more widespread such a morality becomes, the more obvious is its defeat: the few elect souls find tranquillity and achieve moral conquest:

the many are left behind, with the alternative of abandoning the unequal conflict, or enduring the torture of the *other law* in their members *warring against the law* of their mind. I believe it to be written visibly on the history of our own religion that to reduce our Faith to the level of mere morality is to sterilize it altogether and to impoverish the soil in which it is planted. A religion of grace and power, however erratic in the intellectual field, is always truer to human needs than a religion of exhortation, however orthodox: and England has suffered from a prolonged surfeit of exhortation, and a neglect of simple personal teaching of grace. Where this occurs, morality will in the end suffer as certainly as religion. Both a morality without religious faith, and a religion which loses itself in moralizing, tend directly to produce moral disbelief, and act in the long run unhealthily on the very wills which they would fain have strengthened and guided. "I ought, therefore I can," says the moralist: his pupil knows that it should be true, and repeats it, till experience disillusions him, and finding by repeated failure that he "cannot" comes in the end to doubt whether he "ought." It is therefore desirable that we should be alert to perceive the limits of a merely moral education, and use it only as a foundation upon which essential structures must be built. English morals have decayed fast enough in the last half-century; a general moral indecision is

the obvious result of that decay, and mere moral teaching is powerless to undo the mischief; we may hope that it will not have the chance to aggravate it. Morality alone will not bring the will to health: and that for the simple reason that it can prescribe tonics, but cannot nourish; and it fails pitifully when the odds are against it.

Here, however, is the triumph of real religion: it creates health in the will, in hard cases and in easy cases alike. It not only points in the direction of health, it moves towards it, with a strong tendency. So close is the kinship between God and His children. Without the good to aim at they sink below the human level: with knowledge of the good alone they can only measure their weakness, but cannot redeem it: with God they come to themselves.

We need not begin with ourselves if we wish to learn what the healthy will in its perfection can be. The Saints, indeed, can teach us much, and from their partial victories, as from their failures, we might trace the perfect picture. But we have the perfect picture before us, in the Person of our Lord, and we can understand something of the law of its perfection. That law is the law of sacrifice, and our Lord impersonates it completely. *Burnt offerings thou wouldst not; but mine ears hast thou opened. Then said I, Lo, I come, in the volume of the book it is written of me, that I should fulfil thy will, O my God: I am content to do it. Yea, thy law is within my heart.*

The law within the heart, familiar and welcome : the heart attuned to the law, not mechanically, but by the constant energy of filial love : this is health in its perfection, health which knows neither change nor reaction, but is maintained steady and entire by unbroken dependence on its source. This health is not exhausted nor even diminished by its output of service : rather each act and word which flows from it both satisfies and feeds the desire which called it forth ; *my meat and drink is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.* It is equally strong in feeling, and judgment, and action : no emergency finds it unprepared, no perversity of men or things can throw it off its balance. Yet in perfect unity with the conditions of human life, it is renewed day by day, and stage by stage. The bread which sustains it is daily bread like ours, the daily sacrifice is prepared by long spaces of quietude and inward self-oblation, and from time to time, since there are many coming and going, and there is no leisure, there is a going apart into a lonely place to rest. Further, the very perfection of this healthy will is clear from selfishness : it is not sought for its own sake, as an artist might follow his art for the satisfaction which unhindered energy can give, or as a hermit might content himself with the deliverance of his own soul ; *for their sakes I consecrate myself.* So the secret of this human health could be expressed in the same words which, according to the record of

St. John, revealed the mystery of personal unity which lay behind it, *I and my Father are one*: one, as perfect sonship is one with perfect fatherhood, and one in the unity of limitless love for men.

Here, then, is the absolute type of the healthy will, in the more than sinless Humanity of our Lord. Its wholeness differs in character, though not exactly in kind, from any attainable by forgiven men: not in kind, for the union of human sons with the Divine Father is the same thing yesterday, to-day, and for ever, the same in the humblest copy as in the ideal pattern: and yet in character it is different, for our Lord was whole as repelling all moral disease and triumphing over its attacks, whereas we can only know health as a process of recovery and repair. The diseases of the will are moral indecision, perverted love, blindness to the true good, inability to choose, choose firmly, and choose with joy the law of God as motive. Our Lord was rooted and grounded in love, able to apprehend, unerring in choice: and though we must believe that He felt in all its strength the pressure of moral evil, He felt it as external, while with us the enemy is within the camp. Thus there was one element of human weakness which He could not share, one bitterness He could never taste—the weakness of the soul divided against itself, the bitterness of remorse. The health which we can gain through Him must therefore differ profoundly in character from His own. False selves which we

have made deliberately our own must die, disordered affections must be disciplined, deep inward self-deceptions must bear to face the truth, before our will can become such as the spirit can stir to put out the energies of health. The life which is rescued by such medicine and surgery cannot easily escape from the memory of past contamination: even if in its recovery it traces an unwavering line—and how rare such recoveries must be—yet it must remain in the near neighbourhood of disease, it will not easily escape the fear of relapse, and will feel itself to be healed rather than healthy, whole by contrast rather than by growth, remade by the slow removal of remembered deformities.

While this is abundantly clear, the pattern remains our pattern, and such health as we may regain cannot be built up on any other foundation. *Lo, I come to do thy will, O my God; I am content to do it.* To this point confession and forgiveness lead. They are steps that lead up to sacrifice; the altar of life is fenced off, and until we have willed to know ourselves and be known, the way is barred. But the forgiven man finds it open: in the very act of contrition he has acquired the power to offer himself, soul and body, a living sacrifice. He offers his old self and is given a new self to offer. After cleansing comes renewal, the comfort of help, the stablishing of the free Spirit. So the sacrifice of a troubled spirit passes into the sacrifice of righteousness. The

will is freed, if not yet free, healed, if not yet healthy. And the law of its perseverance is the same as the law of its recovery. The healthy will is the offered will, and the offered will is the will sustained: so St. Paul could say, *I am crucified with Christ, yet I live: and yet no longer I, but Christ liveth in me.* Moral decision, ordered love, clear sight of the true good, ability to choose, choose firmly, and choose with joy the law of God as motive, grow up in the will which is offered, empty and receptive, for God to feed and fill. Human life being intermittent, it will have need of constant recourse to the *well of life*: he who takes up his cross daily wins daily strength to carry it: yet his days will be "bound each to each" in what is truly a "natural piety," and he will fulfil the Psalmist's figure of *a tree planted by the water-side*, deep-rooted where fresh nourishment flows unailing.

This then is the true secret of the healthy will. It is the fulfilment of our Lord's prayer, *that the love wherewith thou lovedst me may be in them and I in them.* What is its output in action? The lives of the saints are a part of the answer, but they form only a small part of it: the greater part is to be found, unwritten, in the lives of ordinary men. It is hardly too paradoxical to say that the goodness of exceptional people is less obviously a monument of the Holy Spirit than the redemption of commonplace lives. We may be content then to speak of

one or two aspects in which the health of simple grace may be expected to manifest itself in normal persons.

Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, says the Apostle, as our Bibles translate him. While this is not the primary meaning of the passage, it expresses something which St. Paul might well have said and often did virtually say. It is healthy to do secular business with energy and spirit. Whatever the hand finds to do will be better done if the inner man is at peace with God : and conversely, if religion does not tend in this direction, if it exercises no driving power towards a cheerful acceptance of life's common burdens, it is either unreal in itself or it is misapplied. "To get up day after day to the same employments, and to feel happy in them, is the great lesson of the Gospel."¹ A nervous age like ours, possessed as it is by the love of change and excitement, needs to learn this humble lesson. The present social order inflicts, it is true, a wicked monotony upon innumerable toiling lives, but there is a monotony which is simply good discipline, and to shrink from it is morbid. So it is a function of religious health to enable us to lift the daily load serenely, and to work hard : while the religion which is strong in its emotions and slack in practice is deeply wrong somewhere.

All this St. Paul would and did teach : but in the

¹ Newman, Sermon on the Danger of Riches.

passage quoted he was thinking of a wider principle. "Not reluctant to be enthusiastic, not dull to what you should care about, not sluggish where you should be alert"—so the words might be retranslated, and lest we should think that the fire to be kindled is all our own, he adds, "fired, or heated to the boiling point, by the Spirit." Like all the other elements in the picture of Romans xii, this finds easy exemplification in that other picture which the Evangelists draw. They show us a character wholly free from sentiment, and yet quickly responsive to the demand of real causes: grieved for the hurt of the people, no stranger to national and local feeling, not reluctant to express strong emotion, whether of joy, or anger, or trouble at the hardness of men's hearts: far removed from mere equableness, and still further from neutrality: *in zeal not slothful, fervent in the Spirit*. The gospels will show us quite clearly what the Apostle means. He is not appealing for anything high-strung or feverish, but rather for such a constant sense of the value of life as shall make us wisely ready to give out our best without grudging: chivalrous and responsive, ready to feel and act. He indicates also that if we would be ready to respond to God's impulses we must be kept at a good spiritual temperature; it must not be necessary for the Spirit to drag us out of inertia, to warm us up from zero, but He must find us ready to His hand.

That it is a function of health to be thus respon-

sive, that sound life is never frost-bound, may have been a platitude in the Apostolic age, but it is not so now. Coldness, dullness, boredom, and their concomitants are commonly treated as ailments or accidents: whereas Christian morality sees in them a root of deadly sin, the sin of *accidie*, of inability to care, of coldness to the highest good: they are symptoms of such a lack of health as is due to moral failure, and they ought to be treated as culpable diseases of the spirit. Trivial attacks may, it is true, be fought and conquered by hard mechanical work, and preferably by manual labour; but a radical cure needs something like conversion, a return to the love of God. Hence, as many a tired priest is well aware, the deepest practical remedy for low spirits is to do something for somebody else, for nothing brings back the love of God so readily as self-sacrifice; and often when meditation is hardly possible, contact with pain or poverty or simply with other people's interests will shame us out of our self-made gloom.

I come to do Thy will: I am content to do it. The Laodicean and the cynic know nothing of this, but the man who is in Christ knows it, and to all causes, as well ecclesiastical as civil, brings a ready will, with a steady impulse to give his "utmost for the highest." I am to speak in later chapters of the service to which the healthful Spirit calls us in Church and State: only one consideration may be added here.

The life of the communities to which we belong—

families, guilds and societies, as well as State and Church—depends entirely on the amount of healthy will power which they can command. Every society has an “atmosphere,” and this is the resultant not merely of circumstances and things superficial, but of the strength of its “highest common factor.” Two or three people gathered together in the Name of Christ have a corporate will which lends to each an effectiveness which is not his own: a whole Church united in alert devotion has an undercurrent of general life which is almost personal; you can feel its inspiration—it is contagious. Yet though it is general in operation it is individual at the source, consisting of that which every member supplies. Now the whole Church of Christ ideally and really depends for its health on ourselves. There is no other normal channel through which the faith may be commended to the world than through us men. As Christ is, so are we in this world. On our health hangs not only our own welfare but also the honour of Christ. We are meant to be contributing positive force to the deep undercurrent of faith which is to sustain the Church and win the world. We are not to reckon that somehow or other God will intervene and do His work in spite of us: men are His normal agents: His Spirit works through a spirit-bearing body, and spreads health through those whom He heals. We are, therefore, to say, *Let not them that wait on Thee be ashamed through me, O Lord God of*

Hosts ; and beginning with the smallest circle within which we stand we are to pray that we may put out, whether consciously or unconsciously, the happy contagion of health which spreads, indeed, more naturally through life than through words : for God's righteousness cannot be hid within the heart, nor His loving mercy and truth, where they are welcomed, be withheld from the great congregation.

V

THE HEALTHY MIND

God, who didst teach the hearts of thy faithful people by the sending to them the light of thy Holy Spirit; grant us by the same Spirit to have a right judgement in all things, and evermore to rejoice in his holy comfort.

IF it be true, as for a Christian it is the most certain of practical truths, that the secret of health in the will is to be sought in impulses and gifts of direction which come only to those whose will is attuned to the will of God, it would follow plainly that the mind with all its powers must in some way depend upon the same source of health. It would follow, because the will and the mind are not two separate departments of ourselves which can work independently: we are not constructed in compartments at all; each of us is one person, and the partners in our one personality are inseparable in their working. Thus we cannot think at all, or imagine, or frame a purpose, without willing to think: we cannot perform acts of will without thinking, or wishing, or purposing. We may picture the will as the power-station of our life's factory, and the mind as the complex machinery which enables

it to convert raw material into the finished article of speech or action : and by means of such a picture we can see how the power goes through the whole factory, and nothing moves without it ; but the picture will be imperfect unless we remember that the very impulses which set the power working are initiated and directed by the machinery which it puts in effective motion. Perception feeds thought, and thought in its turn governs perception : thought stimulates the will, and the will maintains the activity of thought : when we desire, and choose, and act, the will and the mind are both hard at work, and in the result of this intricate co-partnership it is we who have acted, and not our will or our mind or our desires alone. So closely knit is the fabric of our nature : and thus it would follow, were we inclined to move along such abstract roads of thought, that God could not give us a healthy will without touching and enlightening our mind. It is good to remember, even though we may be disinclined to bewilder ourselves with these mysteries, how deep and how manifold is the unity of our nature, compounded so inextricably of feeling, desire, imagination, thought and will : it helps us to understand how manifold the elements of religious experience may be, and how manifold the aids which minister to it, while yet the life of religion itself is simply and always one.

But there is an easier path which leads in the

direction which we are now to take. Consider the Creed. When we repeat it, we affirm our belief, our present belief, in *the Holy Ghost, the Lord, and giver of life, . . . who spake by the prophets*. "I learn to believe," says the Catechism, "in God the Holy Ghost, who sanctifieth me and all the elect people of God." That is doubtless a good outline of all that a child needs to learn. But we need something more: we need a broad and just understanding of the truths implied in the whole Christian doctrine of inspiration: and from this we shall be able to take hold of the simple clue which leads straight to the practical secret of the healthy mind.

It will be useful first to take a wide survey. The Christian doctrine of inspiration is of vast range. It is not merely, as some persons might perhaps imagine, a principle invented for explaining the unique authority and character of the Bible. The inspiration of the Bible is, as we shall easily see, only a great instance of a far wider law, a law which includes all knowledge, and wisdom, and skill within its province. We believe in *the Holy Ghost, the Lord, and giver of life*. Our faith teaches us that the whole life of the conscious man is in a peculiar sense the sphere of the working of the Spirit of God. We believe that He has given, and He sustains in us, the power to know and wish, to plan and choose, to imagine and to act. It is He who makes the world such that in it our minds can

find themselves at home, reasoning out and reckoning upon its laws : He who implants in us the love of light and truth, the desire to make things out, the impulse to move forward in the interpretation of nature, and to find law beyond law, truth interlocked with truth. And in all the world of human action, it is our creed that the impulse which has led, through gradual ages of creation, to the discerning of right and wrong, the growth of the conscience, and the dawning of moral ideals for the man and for the State, is His impulse : from Him, as a great element in His creative work, has come the initial stirring of good desire, which in its fulness is the hunger and thirst after righteousness : from Him too, whatever may have been its dim and forgotten origins, the instinct which feels after beauty, as in natural things, so also in form and sound and speech : the instinct which when developed grows into a new power and creates for itself the world of art—a world which overlaps the world of time and sense, and reaches out towards the eternal. So in the story of mankind, read as faith reads it, creation and revelation have moved forward as two sides of the same process. As God brings man into being, He reveals Himself to man : the slow movement of creation brings towards their fulness the faculties by which God may be known, and the instincts which will not be satisfied with anything less than God. The story of revelation is thus co-extensive with

the whole of human history : and while God reveals Himself in many ways and in many degrees, yet over the whole field of man's history we see one normal process at work : the light revealing itself to our race, not so much by sending out new rays as by training us to become sensitive to the creative ray itself.

All this underlies our faith in the Holy Ghost as *Lord, and giver of life*. But we also profess our belief that He *spake by the prophets*. The clause is there in the Creed for a specific purpose : it was meant to warn the Church against those who could not believe that the God of the New Testament, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, could be the same God as the Jehovah of the Jews, that stern and dreadful Law-giver. It is therefore doing something which belongs to the sphere of its original purpose, if it reminds us of the unity of all revelation, and of its variety. By all wisdom everywhere, by all knowledge, and by all beauty God has sent the world His messages. We cannot divide the world by the imaginary line which separates the sacred from the secular. We cannot confine the self-revealing work of God to those obvious spheres in which He has chosen particular men or tribes to be the channels through which the highest truths should be communicated to a wider world than their own. The Greek and the Roman, in their own provinces, were as surely designed to minister to the spiritual education of the

world as was the Jew. *The Jews seek a sign*, said St. Paul, *and the Greeks seek wisdom*: and neither Jew nor Greek rose through his own searching to the level of *the power of God and the wisdom of God in the foolishness of the cross*: yet, great as was the advantage of the circumcision, in possessing *the oracles of God*, the Gentile sought and found some things which the Jew never understood till he borrowed them, and Greek wisdom was woven into the fabric of Jewish theology. It would be difficult to frame a worthy notion of revelation which would exclude the great masters of Greek thought and art and letters from the wide circle of those prophets through whom the Holy Spirit has spoken; for those who realize how much the mind of the Christian Church has been enriched from Hellenic sources, such an exclusion is impossible. The often-quoted saying that "Plato was Moses speaking Greek," does but compress into an epigram the principle that all true wisdom is one at its source.

The wide main river of revelation has been flowing through all the periods of history, and is flowing now: and within it we Christians discern a current endowed with a special energy; that current took its rise far up the stream, and its onward course may be traced continuously; it is marked now by breadth and now by intensity, and from time to time it becomes both intense and broad. To this current, within the main river, we give the special name of

inspiration. It rises in the earliest history of the Hebrews, and grows with the gradual growth of their religious faith: from time to time its power is concentrated in statesmen, kings and prophets: most conspicuously in prophets, who speak as conscious of a God-given message. Yet in its essence it belongs to the nation rather than to individuals, and to the world rather than to the nation. Its result, that which it creates, is a religious consciousness unique in kind and in depth, a consciousness which finds expression and leaves its permanent memorial in written books. The Holy Spirit spake by the prophets: they, and chief among them the poets of the Psalter, belong to us as part of our inheritance: for the gift and power which moved them is of the same Spirit whom Christians worship, invoke and possess.

The beginning of the Christian Church may be figured as a sudden and violent reinforcement of a movement already in progress: comparable, perhaps, to the sudden swelling of the rapids far below a great fall, at the point where the energy of the falling mass re-asserts itself and rises to the surface. The Holy Spirit had already spoken in *the law, the prophets, and the writings*, and His voice had not died away: yet, at a definite point in time, the visible presence of our Lord having been taken away, the power of the Spirit came on men with overmastering force, creating the Christian brother-

hood. The mark of the brotherhood was, has been, and now is, the possession of the Spirit. The characteristic work of the Spirit has been seen in the brotherhood, in its individual and corporate life: primarily in life and in the whole of life, bodily, mental, and spiritual. As among the Jews, so among us, a secondary result of the presence of the Spirit has been the permanent memorial of fact, experience, and principle, in written books. The Church found it needful to write down what was remembered, and to treasure what was written. Little by little the "Spirit-bearing body" grew to an apprehension of the special worth of the Apostolic records as tests and documents of the faith. The power of the Spirit was conspicuous no less in the discernment which marked off the better from the less good of the Church's books, and ranked them on a level with, and even above the accepted canon of Old Testament Scripture. No one can ignore the spiritual supremacy of the books so selected, and no one could wish the Church to have made a materially different choice. Thus among the concrete results of inspiration the New Testament must always stand first. But if we are to hold the faith in its true proportion we are bound to remember that the primary work of the Holy Spirit lies visibly elsewhere. Men, and not books—books only as the permanent record and output of spiritual men—are the sphere of His operation. Speaking broadly, we

may say that the Church is the living monument of the Spirit. If it is not so, the Church is nothing; and if it is so, then both the books through which the Spirit still works in guidance and instruction, and all the other media of the Church's life, are secondary to this great law, that the Spirit is Life evoking life in living persons, and finding in living persons His natural home. Living men in the Church pray for this life—*veni, Creator Spiritus*; they expect to receive it through prayer and sacrament and Bible; and the response to this prayer and expectancy is inspiration. It is a visiting of minds which belong to the Spirit by birth and re-birth—*mentes tuorum visita*: it is the filling, with grace sent down, of hearts created by Him to receive it. If, therefore, we would know what the Christian should mean by health of mind, we have but to scrutinize this gift in the light of our actual needs, making and realizing the tremendous claim that we too are to be carried forward, not only upon the main stream of revelation, but also upon its intenser current, as men of the Spirit, having *the mind of Christ*.

"Come, Holy Ghost, our minds inspire, that by thy holy inspiration we may think those things that be good": so we are to pray. We are to expect that the same power which by inspiration has created the Church and given us the New Testament will heal our minds and keep them whole. We are to believe that our mental powers will not grow as they

were meant to grow unless their activity is stirred, guided, and checked by the Spirit. They may acquire strength and aptitude by any kind of exercise: but strength and aptitude are not everything. We are meant to gain the power of looking at men and things with something really like the mind of Christ; with His purity and charity, at least: and then with something of His depth and breadth. This is the true health of the mind, and it only comes, as the gifts of the Apostolic writers came, by dependence on the Spirit, by inspiration.

It is worth while to remember that in the relation of the Spirit of God to men a wonderful law obtains. The more God helps us, the more of us there is to help: or, to put the same thing in longer words, the higher modes of inspiration tend far less than the lower to supersede the personality in which they work: and the higher the inspiration becomes, the greater is the personal power that it evokes in the man who receives and uses it. We can see this exemplified in the Old Testament and in the New. At the dawn of prophecy we find records of men inspired to prophesy in an ecstasy or trance: so Saul, when he was found among the prophets, had become *another man*, and Elisha called for a minstrel to charm him by music into a prophetic rapture. Similar occurrences were found among the earliest Christians: but both among the Jews and in the Church they belonged to the rudimentary stages of

spiritual experience, and those stages had to pass away before inspiration could develop its full power. Amos and Isaiah, or St. Paul and St. John, on the other hand, being inspired in a far higher degree than the old seers or those who only spoke with "tongues," retained the fullest use of their own minds: the more God helped them to know and to speak, the greater their own personal powers of knowledge and utterance became.

So we ought not to think of inspiration as though it were some strange abnormal process, taking a man out of himself and making him as it were a mere passive instrument for the Spirit to play on: we ought rather to regard it as the normal and natural way by which God will give ordinary people like ourselves the power to use and develop and beautify our mental gifts, and to believe that the more God shines upon us and guides us, the more there will be in us for Him to illuminate and teach.

In what ways, then, may a Christian hope to be helped towards habits of right thinking? First, every grace which touches the character has an indirect and yet a vital influence upon the mind. Among the obstacles to natural and balanced mental growth none are so obdurate as those which spring from moral failure, infirmity, and wilfulness. There are moral diseases which tamper with the very mechanism of the mind itself, impede its movements, and degrade its output; there are others which warp

its direction, so that it moves at all points from a wrong centre. Impurity of heart not only soils the springs of imagination, filling the mind with wrong associations, and leading it to put good for evil and evil for good: it also saps the vigour of thought itself, blurs its clearness, and unfits it for clean work. Pride and self-sufficiency disturb the balance of judgment, incline it to pre-judge where it should deal impartially, and encourage it to be insolently certain where it ought to be open to conviction, till it will neither learn nor forget. This is as obvious in what we call secular knowledge as in the sphere of faith. Clear thinking and right judgment are not every one's gifts: but even those who have the gift cannot keep and develop it unless they enter the "kingdom of man" with something of the spirit of the child—clean, humble, and teachable: anxious to be on the side of truth rather than to have truth on their side. In the sphere of faith, indeed, it is pre-eminently true. He cannot *know of the doctrine, whether it be of God*, who does not *will to do the will* of the Father: the impure in heart shall not see God: and they cannot believe *who seek glory one of another, and the glory which cometh of the only God they seek not*. The tendency therefore of the simple life of religion, nourished from above, and drawing the rhythm of our lives into conformity with the pure good Will, and teaching us the freedom of humble dependence, moves towards mental health. It is

hard to cleanse the imagination: bad thoughts enjoyed and recalled will linger long after the positive inclination to dwell on them has seemed to pass away: but "the spirit to think and do always such things as be rightful," working through right choices often repeated, will effect a slow purification even of the darker chambers of the mind, so that the love of pure thoughts will always prevail, and

e'en the witless Gadarene
Preferring Christ to swine, may learn
That life is sweetest when it's clean.

It is hard also to root out intellectual pride: yet here, too, the tendency of real spiritual life is all in the same direction; its discipline broadens the outlook, and teaches that our completest knowledge is only a little loan from the infinite stores of truth, from which others have borrowed far more and far better than we. Intolerance and violent dealing with the convictions of others may be frequent among Christians, but they are certainly anti-Christian in spirit and in origin. It is hard, too, to hold the faith in an unwavering mental grasp; yet it is true that the Spirit corroborates the witness of our spirit that we are children of God, and as the will to praise and pray and serve is strengthened, the perspective of thought clears up. Problems remain unsolved and insoluble, but the pure in heart see God, or see enough of Him to be sure with a growing certainty

that the tangles of experience have a clue and the maze of life a centre.

Next, we ought to expect, and, indeed, to ask God to help us in forming simple, straight judgments on questions of right and wrong. Looking at the story of our Lord in the Gospels we find that He always went simply to the heart of every moral question. Other people were so sophisticated, or had had such bad teaching from tradition, that they could not understand what to do with the difficulties of the fourth commandment, or the seventh either: nor could they see their way straight to the Kingdom of Heaven where any circumstances, such as money or convention, appeared to make their case exceptional. They were like nervous patients, over-anxious about minor symptoms, and unable to understand the root of their complaints; but our Lord told them at once what was wrong and what was right. St. John the Baptist had possessed a measure of the same absolute simplicity, and was able to give soldiers and civilians just the advice which they needed, advice which would never have occurred to their own perplexed minds. True dependence on the Divine Spirit ought to help us towards this kind of simplicity. It does not require violent efforts of the imagination. We are not called upon to consider what would happen if the Kingdom of God were at once to be established in its completeness, but what is the next step we can take to bring it nearer, things.

being what they are. So a right judgment, while it is perfectly simple, need not necessarily be odd or abnormal. Browning, in the "Epistle of Karshish," has depicted the mind of Lazarus risen from the dead: a mind utterly transformed by the possession of the great secret, a mind which has brought back from beyond the veil truths which go so far beyond all human experience that they dazzle and perplex the finite understanding.

His heart and brain move there, his feet stay here.
So is the man perplexed with impulses
Sudden to start off crosswise, not straight on,

and so the very fact that he knows "God's secret" makes it hard for him to see with human eyes, and judge by such measures as men must use. For all its depth and beauty, that is not a pattern which we can try to copy in detail. The secret entrusted to us is not meant to make us even appear

witless of the size, the sum,
The value in proportion of all things,
Or whether it be little or be much.

We are rather to be content if we can see the ideal, discern something of the mind of Christ, in the next thing to be done.

Our times are such that while there are some great moral questions which need subtle handling, there are far more which call only for a straight mind, resolved to judge and act in the Spirit of Christ, and

not to begin by perplexing itself about the exceptional features of its own case. If questions of sexual and literary morality, for instance, were handled in this spirit, and men were absolutely direct in facing them, we might hope for a moral revolution. In the Church, too, there is a pressing need of simplicity. Custom always tends to harden into law, and legalism is a peril to faith: yet a legalism all too like that of the Scribes is creeping upon us, to the obscuring of the very light which it would fain protect, and we need simple men to judge healthily, and to save our life from being paralysed by the hardening of its forms. "Be ye good money-changers," says an unwritten saying of our Lord: honest, that is, in reckoning values, and well aware of what is worth most.

Our Lord gave no commandments without promise: and the promise of the Spirit is closely attached to a great commandment which He reissued as His own: *thou shalt love the Lord thy God . . . with all thy mind*. We cannot love anything to order: but we can see that there are things which we ought to love, and the Spirit helps us to do the acts which lead us to love them. Hence the Christian, acknowledging, as he must, his responsibility for his tastes, and knowing quite well that one taste is not as good as another, will treat his mind, and the world of knowledge, with reverence. He will acknowledge that it is not healthy for a man who has any mind

for books at all, or pictures, or music, to leave it untrained and abandon it to casual preferences. If he loves his faith and his Church at all, he will be drawn on to try and know about them, and to form healthy judgments about their nature and history. He will find the Faith the most interesting thing in the world, a great clue to human problems, and the one standard by which men and circumstances may be measured. The healthful Spirit will keep him alert to learn, and keep him humble. A certain kind of "private judgment" he will learn to avoid: the judgment which is stiff-necked and unteachable, easily overmastered by the emotion of party feeling. A sound judgment must always make allowance for the movement of other minds, and in particular for the general movement of the mind of the Church. "That infallibility with which Christ willed to endow His Church," is not indeed despotic or fixed: it is the infallibility of one who is certain not to lose his way in the end, rather than of one who can never walk in anything but a straight line: yet it is entitled to reverence. It is largely human, and limited: but so are we; and to despise the general mind of the brotherhood is unbrotherly, and therefore unhealthy. In the Atlantic the eye of the individual voyager is apt to be deceived by the apparent magnitude of the nearer waves: they approach and pass on, yet the ship, which one would expect to rise and fall by their rhythm, is but little affected by them: its

movements obey a greater series of undulations, which the eye fails to grasp: it keeps time with the pulse of the ocean rather than with single waves. So the slow-working mind of the Church moves with a greater, and in the long run a truer rhythm than the individual mind. The healthy judgment of the Christian will therefore be humbly subject to correction. He will make the true sacrifice of the intellect, and that sacrifice consists, not in renouncing the right to think, but in offering the mind upward, for the creating God to illuminate, and outward, to co-operate with the brotherhood in sane thinking and in the general movement towards truth.

At its best, the mind so trained and aided becomes a thing of rare beauty. There are some qualities of fine perception, reverent understanding, and kindly humour, which are the peculiar product of our faith alone; and if these are uncommon, yet there are more ordinary gifts which lie within the reach of all who care to seek them: the gifts of humility, purity, charity, and courage. To know the absolute necessity of these, and to seek them where they may be found, is to know the secret of the healed and the healthy mind.

VI

BODY OR ESTATE

O Almighty and most merciful God, of thy bounteous goodness keep us, we beseech thee, from all things that may hurt us ; that we, being ready both in body and soul, may cheerfully accomplish those things that thou wouldest have done.

I

HAS the Church any right to use and prescribe this kind of prayer ? " Put away from us all hurtful things " : " grant that by thy power we may be evermore defended against all adversity " : the Prayer Book has plenty of them. The Puritans disliked them, and would have had them expunged : they were all for stern and bracing views of life. " I believe," said Cartwright, " there shall be found more than a third part of the prayers . . . spent in praying for and praying against the commodities and incommo- dities of this life." Hooker made a lamer defence than was his wont : such prayers, he contends, have some value in themselves, and they are of great value to the weaker sort, whose worldly desires are insensibly purified by them. " These multiplied petitions of worldly things . . . have therefore, besides their direct use, a service, whereby the Church underhand, through a kind of heavenly fraud, taketh therewith the souls of men as with certain baits."

The Puritan might well ask in rejoinder, whether the Churchman "had seen in the mountain of God the pattern of that heavenly fraud"?

There is in fact no room or need for fraud here at all. The Christian is not called to pretend anything : and certainly not that he does not care about hurtful and helpful things : and the Church is quite honest in teaching him to pray about them. There can be only two reasons for abstaining from prayer for anything : one, that you do not want it, the other, that you do not think it a proper thing about which to have dealings with God. Nothing that really matters to us comes under either of these heads. Herein lies the difference between Christianity and certain other religions and irreligions.

The Stoics, for instance, taught that we must always be unaffected by anything outside us. They made a careful distinction between things within our power of control and things outside it. Everything outside it, they taught, must be regarded as indifferent, and we must not allow ourselves to be moved by it. What they said was often very wise, and expressed in beautiful language. Let me quote from Epictetus, who teaches that we shall not be upset by the breaking of a vase, or the death of a wife or child, if we only are careful to remember that it is just a bit of pottery, or a human being, that we have possessed and lost. "When on a voyage, your ship puts into harbour, and you are allowed on shore, you will pick

up as you go a shell, perhaps, or a plant : but you must keep your eye on the ship, and look out for the captain's call : and when he calls, you must leave all that behind. And so in life, if you are given, not a plant or shell, but a wife or a child, these must be no hindrance to you : and if the captain calls you must run to the ship, without looking back, and leave all behind : moreover, if you are old, you had better not go far from the ship, for fear that you may not answer the call when it comes."

Much of that could easily be translated into Christian language : but it is not Christian. The Christian's wife and child are not things outside himself which he can contemplate with a detached mind, like pieces of furniture—and even furniture may be dear to him through its beauty or utility or associations, so that he would not be unmoved by the loss of it. His world is full of a number of things and persons with whom he enters into close relations : his wife and child are part of the living fibre of himself ; so are his friends, his books and a host of other things in lesser degree. He does not try, like the Stoic, to have no strong attachments. His life does not indeed consist in the *superfluity of things that he possesses*, yet it extends beyond himself in various directions, and is the richer for doing so. Like a tree, it sends out its root-fibres far and wide, and the upper growth is all the healthier and stronger for the wide spreading of the roots—so long

as the soil into which it sends them is good and nourishing, and the life at the heart of the tree is sound.

It may be urged that the Gospel teaches otherwise, laying all its emphasis on renunciation : that it would have us amputate, rather than encourage, our interests, and forbids us to love *the world, and the things that are in the world*. Two things may be said in reply. First : there are indeed many vocations, and some temperaments, for which width of interest has no value. There are, obviously, many who are called to "find their souls" by losing a part of themselves ; to starve some of their instincts in order to concentrate upon others ; these must refuse to let their roots spread : their artistic or social gifts must be to all appearance stifled, and the life which would have been given to them, or derived from them, must be forced into other channels, or be sought from other sources. No human being, indeed, will ever become all that he had the chance of becoming ; every one, either by his own choice or by the force of circumstances, must suffer the loss of some capacity in favour of others ; but there are some for whom the path of obvious renunciation is clearly marked out—they are to follow the Baptist, who came neither eating bread nor drinking wine, rather than the Son of Man. Yet even for these, the spirit of Epictetus will not suffice. They are not to say, "I give it up : it is outside me : why should I care ?" That would be merely to pluck the thorns out of their crown. Sacrifice is not offered

by letting things drop from fingers too apathetic to retain them. The Stoic teaches renunciation, but is careful to provide an anaesthetic. The Christian will feel, and even wince, but will offer his pain and reluctance as a part—even as the major part—of his oblation.

Next, turning from the less normal vocations to the circumstances of the average Christian, it may be safely said that he may root himself deep and wide in life, he may “love life and be fain to see good days”—on one condition. He may love persons and pursuits with all his might, so long as he is sound at the heart, knows that he is a tenant at will, and does not mistake himself for a freeholder. “God gives me music,” he will say, “and wife and child, and health and recreation : they are good to have, and I care about them, and if I lose them He will help me to bear it like a man.” You may be sure that he will not love God best who loves his neighbour or his home or his vocations least. I even think that the truth here is to be found in a paradox ; and that the Spirit of the Cross is more likely to live and work in those who live their life with both hands than in those—if such there be—who persuade themselves of the valuelessness of their earthly holding. Certainly an anæmic heart is a poor offering for God’s altar.

Surely, then, it is no part of Christian health to be apathetic towards pain or disease or loss. The Stoic’s toughness, though it had its nobler element in the belief that the imperturbable man is in tune with the

Reason of the world, too easily degenerated into a sort of cowardice: in such a spirit the schoolboy will toughen his skin to avoid feeling punishment. In like manner the principles of Mrs. Eddy's teacher and disciples in relation to disease and pain, though in the elect they may and do produce a high serenity and healthy peace of mind, tend always to exhibit lower results when brought into contact with common humanity. The world's burden is too heavy to be lifted by those who have no better gospel than to declare it unreal: nor as a matter of fact have they ever attempted to lift it: their gospel differs radically from the Christian in that there is nothing at the heart of it for the poor: its apostles are not driven by its spirit to seek and to save that which was lost, nor have they anything to offer them. For this reason, if for no other, their creed tends to produce in ordinary minds a certain callousness, an atrophy of the power of sympathy. The Christian, who knows that disease is as real as health, pain as real as pleasure—convinced though he may be that the reality of all these things is but relative—is more likely to love and help his suffering neighbours than he to whom health and pleasure are real, but pain and disease are a monstrous and culpable illusion.

There was once a sect which taught that the sufferings of our Lord on the Cross were unreal, and the whole of His human life but the passing of a phantom across the stage: He did but seem to live

and seem to die. They thought to exalt the Divine majesty by keeping it from contact with our poor world : but the Church knew both God and the world far better than they, and held fast to the reality of the Saviour's human nature. It is for us, in our turn, to combat the modern heresy which would delude us into believing that a large part of our human experience is as unreal as a dream. The "Christian Scientists" hold that our selves are a part of God : that God is all, and there is no room in Him for evil or disease ; disease and evil must therefore be illusions. We know better. We are sure that the faculties which tell us of the existence of disease and evil are the self-same faculties through which God Himself becomes known to us. To treat those faculties as the victims of a profound illusion would be to tamper with the very grounds on which we believe ourselves to be children of God. To distrust the reason which guides and interprets our experience is not and cannot be the way of faith : indeed, it leads straight to atheism. The logic of "Christian Science" is as fatal to religion as it is to common sense.

We may, then, be content to say that there are things that hurt us, and to pray against them. We may pray to be kept from adversity of every sort, and from all harmful things, in mind, body, or estate : yet here again one condition must be genuinely fulfilled, and the kind of prayer that evades it is outside the normal laws of prayer. Such petitions are right and

defensible, they are the kind of petition which the Spirit of Jesus will prompt, if, and only if they represent our steady average attitude towards all our normal wants. If in all ordinary circumstances we are accustomed to ask for God's help according to His will, then in extraordinary circumstances of pain or difficulty we shall turn to Him as before, and it will be a healthy part of our normal prayer to ask that we may be kept from what may hurt us. But to use prayer as a last resort; to have recourse to it as a possible emergency exit from a disagreeable situation, so that it is prompted only by the moment's exigency, and does not spring from our true selves; this is a more or less ignoble, or, at least, an indefensible thing. Suppose a man who at most times would not dream of praying for anything: for the common working of his life's machinery, even for his character and ideals, if he has any, he relies on himself, and is limited by his own horizon; his working theory of life does not contain God at all, though in theory he believes in *a* God, who does not matter now, though He may matter one day. To such a man comes suddenly the fear of loss or pain; there is a doctor in the house, and things look grave: business has taken a bad turn: or he has built in the air castles of love or ambition, and they are fading into nothing. And then he goes on his knees. No one will say he is wrong—he is nearer being right than he ever was before: but at any rate he is

not a good specimen of the praying man, and we shall not look to him for the ideal by which devotion should be judged. He is too like a son whose family affection and filial piety lie dormant until he is in need ; not of family love, but of financial assistance. The prodigal is welcomed home indeed, but we have to learn more about prayer than he can teach us. Another man can say, without any pride : " I have always prayed for my wife and my boy : I have always thought of them as God's good gifts to me ; and I have always asked for my daily bread and to be delivered from evil. I try at least not to want things in such a way that my wants come first and God's will second : and now that I am afraid, and trouble is hard at hand, I pray without any shame, that if it be God's will I may be kept from all that may hurt me."

From all that may hurt us, from all such pressure of circumstance, such struggle or temptation, as may strain us beyond the breaking point, and leave us unable to play the man, we shall healthily wish to be delivered ; healthily, if at the back of the mind, at the base of all motives, is the desire " cheerfully to accomplish those things that God will have done," but morbidly, if there is any secret reserve behind the petition, and the ultimate motive is after all only to get through life with the minimum of discomfort. The healthy Christian will be keenly anxious to be at his best, efficient, alert, and cheerful, and will pray to be kept efficient, knowing quite well that the

service required of him may after all be a service of suffering. So an engine, fitted and ready for the road, if it had a voice, might profess such faith as this: "I believe that I have been put together for a good use, for efficient quiet working, and to turn fuel into energy, to go fast and well. I may be wrong: perhaps the idea is that I shall be laid aside, or used for experiments, or work at half-speed, or fight my way along bad roads in bad weather, meeting all kinds of unbearable strain. Anyhow, I hope they will give me at least enough oil and fuel to enable me to try my best, and what is beyond that may be left to some one else to look after."

II

With extreme diffidence I would now go on to face a harder question, which is not far removed from that which we have just been considering: with diffidence, because the whole subject with which it deals is of unique difficulty, and in the present state of knowledge no one has a right to speak as though it were simple; and yet it cannot be passed by without leaving a serious gap even in so slight an argument as this. What then, we are bound to ask, is the relation of spiritual health and healing to bodily health and disease? We have argued that the Christian will neither benumb his sensibilities, like the Stoic, nor attempt to evade suffering by

disbelieving in its existence : how much further can we go? Can we say that the healthful spirit, faithfully sought, will always and everywhere act with healing energy upon the bodily life? Can we say that wherever there is disease there is an absence of God, a diminution of His effective love, a perversion of His plan? Can we say that wherever there is health, there God is, and is effectively present? Or can we brush aside this whole circle of ideas as chimerical, and hold that body is body and spirit is spirit, and that health in the one sphere is wholly independent of health in the other?

There are few questions which more subtly tempt us to give cheap, simple, and indefensible answers. The mere fact of disease, viewed in the mass, cries out to our emotional nature for judgment. The bare thought of all the physical suffering of the human world, all the distortion and mutilation of life, all the frustration of physical promise, is too overwhelming to be withstood. It suggests a vast dark river of affliction, having innumerable tributaries which rise in the mind and memory of man and pour into the main stream their bitter contributions. This impression does but gain strength when we remember the enormous encouragement which social disorder gives to all the forces of disease. Man's spiritual failure on the grand scale, the guilt of a selfish society, is a great factor in the propagation of physical taints. Consumption and lunacy, as well

as lust and drunkenness, are bred and fostered by the sins of an unsocial society, whether in the city or in the village : while all the redemptive forces which play upon social life are on the side of physical as well as of spiritual health. Disease and social sin are firm allies. So the imagination, contemplating the invasion of myriads of bodies by the forces of contagion and decay, must give its verdict without waiting for the reason. This tragedy, it decides, is evil, and necessarily evil : God is not in it, it is an eclipse of all that we mean by goodness. Such is the judgment of the instinct ; and let it be remembered that the thing judged is real and is no phantom. The evidence for it is no more deceptive than the evidence which convinces us of the existence of sun, moon, and stars. Those who deny its reality have no coherent conception of what reality may be. Disease is real, as real as anything in time or space can be : it is as real as music or roses, as real as dirt or untidiness : its parentage is not to be found in the illusions of mortal mind ; and if in some of its types it is mental, and takes the shape of illusions, in the overwhelming majority of its forms it might safely defy every effort of the mind to create it. It is real, and it seems hopelessly evil.

Health, on the other hand, is as obviously good. Here, too, the imagination decides out of hand. The body in sound order, in full possession and use of all its faculties and functions, maintaining the equable

balance of its powers unhindered and uncontaminated: successful in repelling disease, triumphantly absorbing and assimilating food, solving all the practical problems of animal chemistry—this is all good: it realizes the body's plan and purpose, it *is* bodily life in its purity, unutilated. Health is good in idea and reality, good to keep, almost better to recover: never returning without bringing with it cheerfulness and the atmosphere of congratulation: good to feel and good to exercise.

So the imagination decides: but it decides largely in advance of the evidence, and the evidence will not endorse its easy verdicts. On the contrary, it reveals both in health and disease things which the imagination had not suspected.

First, we may use the word evil in two very different senses: we may use it to mean that which is morally evil, the bad will, the deliberate breaking of the law of conduct, and that is as near what we may call absolute evil as anything we can conceive: it is bad without qualification, without any reference to its consequences. But we may also use the word evil to mean that which is not bad in itself and by itself, but bad for something or some one, hostile to some purpose, inadequate to some function. In this sense gravitation is bad for a man falling over a cliff, and oil is bad to put out fire with. Now disease is evil in this second sense: it is very bad for the bodily health, it is hostile to the purpose which the physical life is

trying to carry out, it does not help us to perform our bodily functions. It is not bad in the first sense : it has no necessary connection with the will or the moral life at all : it can operate quite easily without any consent or surrender on our part. And to say that it is bad in the second sense is not saying much : it is indeed not saying a word more than that disease is disease, which we know already. In fact, when the imagination says that disease is evil, it is probably making some enormous assumptions : it is assuming, I expect, that disease thwarts the very purpose for which bodily life exists : that it is bad, not merely for the bodily life itself but also for the ulterior business which bodily life is here to carry out : and this is a very large assumption. The assertion that disease is evil proves, then, on examination to be worth very little : it only drives us back to the previous and profounder question, What is life for?

A similar dissatisfaction is experienced when we examine the assertion that health is good. Health is physically good, no doubt, but what, after all, is physical goodness good for? It is, or may be, strangely independent of real or moral goodness. Moral goodness in the rarest perfection may be found making use of a shattered earthly tenement : and the most careful cult of bodily health may be, and often is, a purely non-moral thing, bringing no real goodness into the world at all. For example, physical soundness cultivated with a single eye to sport is

only good in a very equivocal sense. I once knew an Italian hotel-keeper who explained to me with perfect frankness that he had adopted the English mode of life for a very curious reason. He was a man, as he readily confessed, who lived entirely for sensual gratification: and finding that pleasure had its cost, and might undermine the constitution of a careless devotee, he sought to discover a way of life which would promise him both length of days and constitutional vigour. This he found in the habits of the Englishman: and was therefore prepared to commend from experience the virtues of cold bathing and regular exercise. He was as healthy a creature as could be imagined; and I do not think it would be easy to find a more suggestive commentary on the facile assumption that health is a good thing. Health is neutral, if there is any other standard than the physical by which the values of things human must be measured: it can only become genuinely good when it is consecrated to good ends: otherwise it is just animal and earthly.

We shall not then solve the mystery of pain by any short-cut. There is a vast amount of health in the world which is only animal or psychic, and it is no more and no less Divine than any other animal or vegetable phenomenon. It is capable, like all natural things, of becoming sacramental, of being redeemed into the service of the spirit, but until it is redeemed it belongs to a lower order, and is not yet good

except in a lower and imperfect sense. On the other side of the picture we have the vast complexity of disease, defying generalization : some of it belongs, so far as it is possible to see, purely and simply to the animal order : it is in no way connected, so far as its origin goes, with the life of faith or unfaith : it is simply an incident in the warfare of our animal organism : it does not come near the spiritual sphere till it challenges the sufferer to bear it as a cross, and the man of science to fight it in the spirit of sacrifice. On different levels we find sickness directly or indirectly traceable to sin, sin in the individual or sin in the community : maladies of the spirit and maladies of the body acting and interacting with the utmost subtlety : evils engendered by failure of faith and removable by its restoration. There is no easy road to the solution of problems so intricate. It is idle to treat all sickness as though its root were in the life of the spirit : it is idle to speak of health as though it were in itself Divine.

And yet, although the ultimate problem of disease is as insoluble as that of moral evil, the practical life of grace has its practical answers to the concrete problems of experience. The healthful spirit, first of all, makes health worth having, lifting it out of the animal order and setting it in the spiritual, harnessing it to do the active work of love for God and man. Nor is there any doubt of the healthful action of the Spirit upon the sick, ranging through all the

categories of disease. There is a healing which heals the soul and transfigures the suffering of the body: such healing blesses not only the sufferers but all those who come near them. *Through an infirmity of the flesh*, many unconscious apostles could say, *I preached the Gospel unto you*. There is a healing, too, which radiates from the spirit through the body and restores its lost balance, enhancing the curative value of any agent which remedial wisdom may employ. This lesson the Church is now learning, and to learn it rightly will tax all the energies of faith and wisdom.

God, we may well be assured, is on the side of real health, whether of soul or of body or of both. But—though I speak with all desire for further enlightenment—we are not to imagine that He acts, as Creator and Restorer, more readily or more truly through one medium than through another. A tendency is abroad which ranks such cures as are wrought through the mind as essentially holier than those in which the aid of medicine or surgery is employed. This is surely a dangerous tendency. Curative agencies may, without grave injustice, be roughly divided into those which rely in the main upon physical means and those which employ some form of suggestion. Now to perform or undergo a surgical operation and to administer or absorb a drug may be a purely non-spiritual process: and if it is so, the resulting health, if health result, will perhaps be non-spiritual also.

Exactly the same thing is true of the use of suggestion. It is in itself a purely neutral force: it is as familiar to the African witch doctor as to the European mental healer. It can produce the symptoms of poisoning as readily as it can allay the storm of hysteria. It may be, and is, as freely employed by persons quite devoid of religious faith, as by those to whom the whole healing process is a sacrament of the Divine. To suppose that when we evoke the latent powers of the sub-conscious self we are necessarily calling into activity powers that are holy is a mere delusion. We are simply using agencies which are capable of being redeemed into spirituality. It is with the mental healer as with the doctor and the surgeon. He may be unspiritual: and unless he and his patient have the will to heal and be healed in union with the will of God, into the life of real health, he will merely be producing non-spiritual results by non-spiritual means. In brief, every curative agency, of whatever character, may be employed in alliance with a serene and prayerful faith: such a faith lends spiritual force and value to any means which it may wisely choose to employ; moreover, daily experience is proving that here, as in the other spheres of applied religion, great marvels are possible—true religious faith enhancing to an amazing extent the curative value of means which in themselves are neutral.

It is, however, no part of religion to promise us

painlessness. It would be a grave disaster to the faith if ever men came to think that its chief recommendation lay in its properties as a curative power. The healthful spirit brings us something better, and that is courage. Pain lies ahead of us, and there is no ingredient in the contentment of our normal life which we hold on a secure tenure. The Christian will learn, and will gain the power, to think of the future, with all its risks and its certainties of sorrow, in a tranquil and settled spirit. The best is his, so long as his life is *hid with Christ in God*: and the rest he will leave, convinced that no suffering is ruinous, no loss unredeemable, whether in mind, body, or estate. It is one of the lessons of the faith, and it is best learnt in suffering, to make no bargains with God. The lower nature is always ready to put limits to its own endurance: "so much loss I will bear, but beyond that point I cannot and will not go." Such was the religion of Jacob. *If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come to my father's house in peace: then shall the Lord be my God.* The Christian's health is a stouter fabric: he is, at any rate, in a school of higher discipline, where he can learn to say with the prophet: *Although the fig tree shall not bloom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation.*

VII

THE CITIZEN

O God, who hast taught thy Church to keep all thy heavenly commandments by loving thy Godhead and our neighbour; grant us the Spirit of peace and grace, that thy universal family may be both devoted to thee with their whole heart, and united to each other with a pure will.

*I*F we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another. Does it follow, and if so, why? The remaining clause of the sentence seems to depend quite naturally upon what goes before it: *and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.* Light and cleansing belong to one another by nature, but why must light give rise to fellowship? The logic arrests the mind with a challenge. Yet it is very like much else in the New Testament. *Thou, when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren. Freely ye have received, freely give. Herein shall all men know that ye are my disciples if ye have love one to another* (not, you will observe, "if you are good and holy," but "if ye have love one to another"). As soon as the disciple comes into the kingdom he is to be *salt* and

light: he is to spread healing and guidance. The New Testament is the citizen's book : it knows nothing of a spirituality which is selfish. It teaches the infinite worth of the human soul : but it also teaches that the loveless soul is worth nothing. So St. John is in line with the whole tenor of the Gospel when he puts "fellowship" in the first place as our first response to "light." Light, in his scheme of thought, stands together with life, truth, and love, over against darkness, death, falsehood, and hatred. To live the life "born of God" is to forsake all that belongs to the side of evil, and to come into alliance with all that is on the side of good. So he who *knows the truth* has *passed from death into life*, "walks in light" and will *love the brethren*. The light will show him what God is, what he is himself, and what his brother is and needs : he will then not want to hide either from himself or from God or from his neighbour. The truth will keep him from the "lie in the soul": in it he will know that God is one Who loves and gives, and that the true man will not withhold himself from the *brother whom he hath seen*. The life received from God the giver is that of one Who *laid down His life for us*: he that is *begotten* into this life will of necessity seek to *lay it down for the brethren*. So all the roads lead in the same direction. St. John the mystic is the preacher of active fellowship ; the love which is man's response to God is to be fulfilled, not in a rapture of personal

experience gained, but in the joy of personal service given.

Long before the coming of our Lord wise men had discovered that man is by nature (that is to say, at his best) the social animal, meant to be gregarious and something more: and that the solitary man, dependent on none and responsible for nobody, must be "either a beast or a god," too far below or too far above the human level to be reckoned as a man at all. Our Lord, here as everywhere, takes instinct for His rough material, redeems it and lifts it to the level of grace. From the beginning of time men had held together in the family, the tribe, the city; instinct and necessity drove them on towards stronger and stronger combinations; as the weaker social units went to the wall the forms of combination became ever more and more intricate: in subtler and more far-reaching ways men came to be dependent upon each other for mutual support, for defence, for aggression. Then in the fulness of time came the Gospel, proclaiming the Kingdom of God as the true kingdom of man, offering redemption and freedom to the individual, but saving him for the sake of the others as much as for his own. The whole method and spirit of its work was social. No man in the Church could or can feel that he has *quicken*ed his own soul. He came into the temple by steps that others have built for him, and when within it he is sustained by the inheritance of their faith: their life

lives again for him : he has a goodly heritage. And as he owes a vital debt to the makers of his inheritance, so in the using of it he is dependent upon his brothers, in worship and work, in the sphere of the mind as of the spirit. The prayer of the Kingdom is to *our* Father, through *our* Lord Jesus Christ : its creed expresses the common rather than the individual mind ; its highest life, as received and offered, is focussed in a common meal ; its ministry exists—like that of the guardians in Plato's ideal state—for the building up of saints for the work of mutual service.

So the kingdom takes and utilizes the forces of tradition, patriotism, and common interest : but it lifts them to a level which purely secular society never even sought to reach. The foundations of the City of the World rest, so St. Augustine taught, on the shifting sand of self-love, the desire for temporal order and temporal peace : developing on its own lines it can reach the highest pitch of efficiency and expediency, but its ultimate aim, even if it were to be reached, would not be the true goal of humanity : it cannot express all that man is capable of becoming. Even the ideal secular state could only be the embodiment of power and wisdom, while the normal state is liable to degenerate into tyranny, false democracy, or the rule of wealth. The City of God rests on the rock, for it is built upon the love of God and the love of men for God's sake : and the

building which rests on that basis can go on till we all come, in the unity of the faith, to the perfection of manhood.

Ever since the preaching of Christ's Kingdom began these two great powers have been at work in human life, working sometimes side by side in independence, sometimes as antagonists, most often in some degree of mutual dependence: on the one side the City of God, the visible and imperfect expression of the Divine idea, never wholly pure, and often infected by the diseases which it ought to be healing: and on the other the City of the World, making progress on the whole, though unevenly, in the organization of life, and often lifted by ideals higher than its own.

We are citizens of both cities, having responsibilities in each sphere. We believe that one day *the kingdom of this world will become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ*. We do not hope to see that consummation brought about by violent expedients. History has shown clearly enough that some expedients will not work. A spiritual hierarchy claiming authority over temporal sovereigns, such as was the mediæval Papacy, can only succeed in secularizing the Church: nor on the other hand does the Kingdom of Heaven come nearer when the legislator seeks to promote it by compulsion. But good citizenship, in Church and State, does work. Every one who bears secular burdens in the spirit of the Cross does bring the Kingdom of Heaven nearer.

In him the ideals of State and Church converge and meet. His temporal citizenship, if untouched by spiritual fire, would be a mere affair of policy; his Churchmanship, if the power in it were never harnessed to active work, would be a refined self-seeking, proved unreal by its fruitlessness. But the Christian citizen serves mankind all the better because he loves God, and loves God all the more truly because he serves his brothers.

Thou, when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren: strengthen the brotherhood wherever it is to be found, both in the visible sphere of God's kingdom, and in the kingdom which shall be His one day. Work and pray for the peace of the Church, for its health and growth: work and pray for the healing, peace of the secular order, for its cleansing, and for its upward growth.

I am my brother's keeper, and he is mine. All that concerns life here and now, everything that makes for well-being or the reverse, is the Christian's business. It matters intensely to him whether the forces which mould the lot of mankind are good or evil. Bodily conditions affect spiritual persons, and help to determine men's spiritual chances. The life of the state or the city is the Churchman's concern: its wounds and diseases are his call and opportunity. He is the appointed minister of the pity and love and wisdom of Jesus Christ. He will therefore make politics, in the true sense of the word, the

corollary of faith: and he will think that the man who withdraws from citizenship in the interest of religion is like a gardener who is too fond of his flowers to care about the chemistry of the soil.

Newman, in a sermon of rare beauty on the Danger of Riches, teaches what appears to be a diametrically opposite doctrine. "The greatest privilege of a Christian is to have nothing to do with worldly politics—to be governed and to submit obediently; and though . . . selfishness may creep in, and lead a man to neglect public concerns in which he is called to take a share, yet, after all, such participation must be regarded as a duty, scarcely as a privilege, as the fulfilment of trusts committed to him for the good of others, not as the enjoyment of rights (as men talk in these days of delusion), not as if political power were in itself a good." Those words were written, one may suppose, at a time when the ferment which led to the Reform Bill of 1832 had not yet subsided, and when quiet minds went in dread of innovation, clung to the old order, and regarded Radicalism as almost necessarily irreligious. If so, they were also written at a time when the modern industrial world was just coming into existence, and when a really enlightened Christianity might have exercised a powerful influence in mitigating the moral and social disasters which the industrial revolution brought with it. "Worldly politics" would not be what they are to-day had

the religion of the early nineteenth century stood less fastidiously aloof from them. Newman preached peace and retirement: was it a safe lesson for his age, or is it safe for ours? Ideally, no doubt, the "better part" is reserved for those who inhabit "those amiable and specially blessed tabernacles where the worshipper lives in praise and intercession, and is militant about the unostentatious duties of ordinary life": theirs is the life of "Christian privilege": but who has a right to claim such privileges when the pressure of duty is so overwhelming? Mary would not have sat with folded hands had Martha's life been crushed out of her by overwork and bad food. If our world were in order, if it were so organized that every one in it had a fair chance of a healthy life of work and leisure: if there were no preventable distress arising from bad social conditions: if ours were such a city of justice as Plato drew, where every one was able to have and exercise his own function—then it might be permissible to tell the common Christian to "have nothing to do with worldly politics, to be governed and submit obediently." Now, however, it is not permissible. Those who would so hold aloof from citizenship are still citizens: they deal in the markets, they eat bread and wear clothes: they contribute, though negatively, to the general voice of public opinion. If the peace which they enjoy rests upon economic injustice or folly, they are not the less responsible

because they choose to be unaware of it. They are still the makers of the social order to which they belong.

Think of the need and the sorrow—the hopes of our time: think too of the average mental attitude of the English Churchman—not the man or woman of exceptional gifts and energy, but the normal type: and then consider whether at such a time to such people it is possible to preach abstention from social or civic concerns. I would rather invert the whole of Newman's scheme, and say that for the exceptional few it is well that they should so abstain: but that the mass of men are called to awake, to fulfil the trust committed to them for the good of others, to recognize the rights of their brothers, and to regard political power, not as a good in itself, but as the necessary instrument whereby good may and must be brought out of evil.

It is sufficiently obvious that if there is anything in the tone of political life, municipal or imperial, which is below the Christian level: if there are acrimony, self-seeking, and corruption, these are not reasons why the Christian should hold aloof. In our own internal economy, we are told, the phagocyte does not think it his privilege to avoid the bacillus which creates disease: he rushes in millions to the seat of danger. If the disease spreads and takes hold, it is more the fault of the phagocyte than of the bacillus. So, in London or New York, if a board of

guardians is left to the men who have axes to grind, or if a whole city is sold, body and soul, to an enormous organization of speculators, it is foolish to blame the powers of darkness—they, after all, have performed their natural functions. The blame rests upon the children of light, who have chosen to hide their candle under a bushel.

But there are two other reasons which should stir the man who believes in his religion towards the activities of the citizen. First, the work to be done is redemptive work, in which the whole community must share, and most of all those who believe that a redemptive power is at work in themselves. "Being governed" is not a simple matter, like being moved on by a policeman. It is enormously complex. There is no one evil to be remedied, no one good thing that can be done without setting in motion other forces of good or evil. For instance, our governors wish every child to have some education. Among the instruments which they employ will be a member of a local education committee. He will find that his work first takes him up to the edge and then plunges him into the heart of the whole social problem. The underfed children introduce him to the problem of casual labour: casual labour—or unemployment—leads on to the work of married women: from the mother who has to work just before or after her child is born he discovers the problem of infant mortality. He has probably had

a glance at the housing question and the meaning of alcohol, and gathered some material for judgments on these matters *en route*; and during the whole process of his enquiries he has been conscious that what he has to deal with is not a set of circumstances, but a business in which character and circumstance are inextricably intertwined. How to help, how to redeem, how to give a fair chance to living men and women is the problem of government: and there is no conceivable way of solving it which does not involve the co-operation of whole armies of helpers, grieved for the hurt of the people. It will not be solved by merely "being governed." The best brains of the community must work through countless hands, and those hands will not move unless they are inspired by the spirit of self-sacrifice, which is the healthful spirit of Jesus Christ. Men so inspired to care and think for the redemption of our social life will not go without their reward. They will meet with disappointment more often than with success: but they will be learning about life in the best possible school, for the real lives of men and women can only be understood by those who give out their best for their sakes. And in their learning, their failures, and their achievements they will be helping, as a cloistered piety can never help, in the building of the living temple.

And next, the work of worldly politics is not only redemptive, it is constructive and full of hope, though

the ground plan of the building does not yet appear and the hope is very distant. The world is old in years, but human society is still young, quite immature, and full of the power of growth. It is young and immature because it has not yet discovered its powers or their meaning. The full-grown person knows where he is going, makes plans for himself, and exercises control over his movements. When he was a child he left himself to circumstances. So in the social order, there was a time, which is now beginning to pass away, when we left ourselves to circumstance, and it was supposed that abstract and uncontrollable laws were the masters of man's destiny. An age is now beginning to dawn—it is full of peril as well as of hope—which is more like that of early youth. Men are learning that the chief factor in their development is within their own control. They will be not merely what circumstances make them, but what they will to be. More and more it is becoming clear that the things which make and mar well-being are within the grasp of human power.

Circumstance, environment, and industrial conditions, so far from being immutable and immovable, are the creation of human activity or inertia: men make them and men can modify them. In all spheres of social life a new feeling is abroad. No one believes that unemployment, as it now exists, is incurable, or sweated labour; every one thinks that

pauperism is to a very large extent a preventable disease. Just as the doctors say that consumption, if the nation chose, could be stamped out in half a century, so it is agreed that human wisdom and goodwill, if there were enough of them, could first mitigate, and in the long run even abolish, a large proportion of the worst social disorders.

If this is true, and if the coming age is to be marked by increasing confidence in man's power to mould his future, it will presumably be a period of hazardous experiments and frequent failure : a period when ideals (such, for instance, as those of Socialism and Individualism) will come into sharper conflict and be tested by their working value. In such a time, what factor in progress could be more weighty than the existence in the Christian Church of a mass of men and women all on the side of goodwill, and all humbly asking for wisdom? It is quite conceivable, indeed, that a society shaped and controlled by powerful minds might be anti-Christian at the heart : it might aim at the mere suppression of the weaker, and give the earth over to the clever and the strong. The best elements in life might come to be as much at the mercy of such a tyranny as our cotton-spinners are now at the mercy of American gamblers. What hope is there, then, that progress, as it becomes more deliberate and calculated, will move towards an end which humanity can recognize as true and adequate? We believe that Christianity

alone, as an ideal, and the Grace of God alone, as a power, can point men along the true way and help them to find it. We believe that the acknowledgment of God in Christ and all that flows from it is certain to solve "all problems in the world and out of it." We believe that this is the river of life, and that here the *healing of the nations* is to be found. We believe that *the gates of hell shall not prevail* against the brotherhood of men in Christ. If we believe these things, we confess that we hold the key of progress: we know what will make life worth living. Could there be a greater disaster than that such a faith and such a hope should fail for lack of active love, and that the onward movement of mankind should lose the true way through the fault of those who, knowing the "one thing needful," preferred to keep it to themselves?

VIII

THE HOUSEHOLD OF GOD

O Almighty God, who hast knit together thine elect in one communion and fellowship, in the mystical body of thy Son Christ our Lord ; grant us grace so to follow thy blessed saints in all virtuous and godly living, that we may come to those unspeakable joys, which thou hast prepared for them that unfeignedly love thee.

O Lord, we beseech thee let thy continual pity cleanse and defend thy Church ; and because it cannot continue in safety without thy succour, preserve it evermore by thy help and goodness.

BUT *our citizenship is in heaven.* So wrote St. Paul, the citizen of no mean city : having before him the vast visible organization of the Roman Empire, and remembering that in it too he had a citizen's rights. That *civitas* was of the earth, the highest power that the earth had ever seen : it was wonderful and almost superhuman in its working, splendid in the pride of its outward symbols, in the disciplined movement of its legions, in its administrative and judicial order, in the Roman spirit which was alive in it from the centre to the circumference. It was small wonder that so vast a unity of power should overawe the outer nations with a superstitious terror : that within the empire itself the spirit of the Roman people and the central figures in whom it was, as it were, incarnate should be raised

above the human level to the status of divinity ; so that the Roman citizen, like the Christian, claimed for his state a supernatural sanction. Yet the Christian looked higher and claimed more. He believed that the empire had its place in the Divine order, and was constituted as a minister of justice and a restrainer of the hidden forces of evil, by Divine decree : but this ordinance would endure, he thought, only for a time. Far behind and far above it he saw something that would endure for ever : a city founded in heaven, in the mind of God ; existing, as a part of the Divine idea, from “eternal times” ; existing also in that arc of the full circle of the kingdom which already had shape in the heavenly places ; existing too in the earthly part (or counterpart) of the heavenly city which was now in building upon the earth, the *living temple*.

Our citizenship is in heaven. That is what makes it really worth while to be a Churchman, and makes it a matter of obligation, not of casual choice. God has meant men for this, and framed this fellowship for men. It is a part of the *eternal purpose*, the *mystery which from all ages hath been hid in God who created all things*. The earthly city is of the earth : men build it, as they built the tower of Babel, with vast substructures, and it grows storey by storey into an enormous fabric ; but every increase in height is only an added danger to the whole : it cannot of itself reach heaven. The

heavenly city is of heaven by birth : it comes down from above to us : the idea and the inspiring force in it are God's. *I will build my church*, said our Lord. St. Paul, as the *wise master-builder*, laid the foundation, but he did not create the plan. Others, according to the measure of their ability or inability, wisdom, and unwisdom, build upon it *precious stones, wood, hay, stubble*, but the plan remains, and grows towards completion in spite of them. And although the perfect city is invisible, being hid in the mind of God, yet His redeeming purpose is at work visibly upon the earth. There is a visible brotherhood. It is far indeed from being *without spot or wrinkle or blemish*, but it holds together ; and that is a great mark of the real "heavenly city." Men who possess its spirit will not leave it for any kind of motive that is rooted in self. They will prefer to suppress themselves, to sacrifice themselves for the brotherhood, rather than to break its unity. So it is visibly doing the work of the unseen Architect, however imperfectly it works out the plan.

And we who are in the visible brotherhood know quite well that the plan is far beyond our apprehension. *The Lord knoweth them that are his*. As in the visible Church—and in the visible Churchman—there are tares and wheat, and both grow together, the discerning between them being reserved for God alone, so it is in the broad field of human life. Everywhere there is more good than the

human eye can see: everywhere there are citizens of the kingdom, unconscious of their citizenship: everywhere God has in His keeping those who belong to Him now, and those who shall belong to Him some day—the *great multitude which no man can number* of the unknown elect. But our calling is to the visible body. We are not members of an abstraction. There can be no wisdom in breaking the visible unity into splinters for the sake of the invisible: nor in arguing that because God's perfect kingdom is beyond our vision, therefore anything which we can see is of no importance. We belong to a body which, with all its sins and shortcomings, does intend with all its soul to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. We believe that it claims us Englishmen by the highest claim of duty. When it speaks of its life as continuous and Catholic we understand by those epithets that it does not now desire, nor has ever desired, to diminish the unity of Christendom by any act of separation. By "succession" we mean nothing magical, but we do mean something serious: and chiefly we mean the preservation of the spirit of unity, passing on from age to age, as opposed to the spirit of dissidence; the continuous symbol and sign of brotherhood unbroken. Since, then, we believe that God meant us for brotherhood, and has prepared for us the perfection of it in a heavenly city, while our earthly membership of the Catholic Church is the earnest—the pre-

destined earnest—of the brotherhood that is to be, our Churchmanship must be to us a very vital thing. Through it we are able to profess with St. Paul that *our citizenship is in heaven*. In it we ought to be feeling the pulsation of a greater life than our own: and in this street or quarter of the city which is ours in the English Church we ought to be at work, building, enlarging, purifying, co-operating with the Power of light and growth.

One thing is indispensable. Life in the City of God begins with it, and cannot begin without it: is sustained by it, and without it must dwindle and perish; the incoming power of God's grace, the "healthful spirit." Here one may speak dogmatically. Any Churchman who thinks that he can get on without lifting up empty hands to God, who thinks he can work out as much of his own salvation as is necessary without surrendering his independence, is missing the whole secret. He had far better be out in the wilderness, struggling for faith and not finding it, searching for truth and baffled in his search, than settled down at home in effortless and ambitionless comfort. In schools and colleges it is often found that success in an examination is a deadly thing. The candidate has good reason, having acquired a certificate, to believe that he now knows enough and need want to know no more. So in religion, it is frequently found that men have reached, or convince themselves that they

have acquired, a sort of status which should protect them from the disquietude of further desire for progress or amendment. They "do not profess to be saints," and do not wish to go too far in their relations with God. It is not for them, not, they would say, for men in their situation and of their temperament, to *hunger and thirst after righteousness*, and to say, *O God, thou art my God, early will I seek thee ; my soul is athirst for God, yea, even for the living God*. Genuinely anxious to escape the peril of hypocrisy, they do not realize that they are sacrificing the chance of thoroughness, depth, and reality. Their faith is shorn of one whole dimension. It may often be true that a man's range of emotion or sentiment is limited. Not every one is capable of a religion deep enough for tears or high enough for joy. Yet there is one thing of which the least tender-minded of the faithful need never lose sight unless he chooses. He need never lose hold of the truth that everything worth having in religion comes straight from God, and must be drawn from His stores day by day. To grasp this firmly is to hold life by the right handle. To realize it is to gain a standpoint, an attitude towards God and life, which need never be lost, whatever one's temperament may be. And on this the whole of a Churchman's life is bound to depend. He must keep open the inlets by which God habitually reaches us—they are manifold, but prayer and communion are the chief, and may

serve as symbols of all the rest. He must value the Church on this basis, first of all. Everything else, however good, is minor and subordinate. The outward forms of religious expression, the traditions of worship, the service of art in the holy place, the organization of good works—all these are holy in so far as they serve the end for which alone they exist: they are aids, symbols, and vehicles by which that which comes down to us from God can be appropriated and administered. But first and foremost the Church is the home of grace. Here we may be lifted up on the rock that is higher than we, hidden in the secret place of the tabernacle, taught, cleansed, and fed. Here God has prepared good things for them that love Him: and the first question to ask ourselves, the first test by which a citizen may be judged, is whether he has any desire left for such good things as pass man's understanding; or whether through dullness, neglect and resistance to the Spirit he has, as it were, roofed himself in from God, and wants no more of Him.

If the first vital matter is grace desired and received, the second is loyalty, the citizen's spirit of love, fellowship, and self-sacrifice. Here again it is important to gain the right standpoint and hold to it steadily. The Church is not a casual consorting together of persons for mutual improvement. It is not an accident by which men of similar tempera-

ment are drawn together. It is often asserted in explanation and even in justification of the present divisions in the religious life of England, that the different bodies represent different types of humanity, different aspects of religious instinct, which are bound to express themselves in distinct organizations, each having its own conventions and forms of worship. The prevalence of such a view among people who read the New Testament is strange in the extreme. It is no exaggeration to say that a subdivided and fissiparous Christianity is the very antithesis of the New Testament ideal. In the Church, as St. Paul knew it by experience and wrote of it by inspiration, the life of an organic unity is sustained by the contribution of diverse elements. What qualifies men for unity in the Church is not that they are all alike, but that they are all different. What makes the unity of the Church a nobler thing than any earthly unity is that within it opposites can combine: *the love of Christ constrains* the man of ideals to work with the man of facts, the man of imagination with the man of will. Without this interchange and interplay of character and disposition there would be no room for the very thing which makes a Churchman, the love and self-surrender which finds life in losing it. *I am of Paul, I of Apollos, I of Cephas*, said factious Corinthians. The modern response to the needs of these three mental attitudes, one may suppose, would be the

founding of three denominations, each of which would cheer itself with the thought that so long as there was an invisible Church elsewhere, schism at Corinth was a trivial matter. And so there would have been three flourishing bodies, each of which would ignore the fact that by cutting itself off from the brotherhood it had impoverished both itself and the rest of the Church.

That is a process which is seen at work, doing deadly work, wherever Christians have come to talk of Christian unity as a casual or indifferent matter. The English Church, which need have no easy conscience in respect of its dealings with separated bodies, loses immensely in moral vigour, fire, and directness from lack of organic union with the "Free Churches." They on their side lose immensely in reverence, depth, beauty, and stability by their lack of organic union with us. We lose immensely through lack of organic union with the Roman Church: we lose by becoming insular, by failing to understand the religion of other nations: our Catholicism, though real, is cramped. And they lose by separation from us: we could teach them lessons of fearlessness and freedom, and help them to regain the idea of the episcopate, which they have lost by over-centralization: they have something English to learn from us, as we have something cosmopolitan to learn from them. Co-operation, goodwill, and friendly intercourse may mitigate some

of these evils, but they can effect no radical repair. It is worse than idle to speak as though even a deep general uniformity in good desires were a proper substitute for real unity or could bring adequate compensation for the damage which on every side results from disunion. I suppose that in France, before the Revolution, there was a general uniformity of spirit in the different provinces of the kingdom; De Tocqueville indeed asserts that there never was a country in which one man was so like another: but the whole kingdom was divided by internal tariff walls; the free passage of merchandise was hampered at every little local frontier; and to this economic subdivision there was added an apparently insuperable yet wholly conventional set of barriers between class and class. "Each one of the thousand little groups of which French society was made up thought of nothing but itself." So in spite of community of interest, the wine-grower and the farmer suffered from restrictions on the interchange of their goods: while the nobleman, the *roturier*, and the *bourgeois* kept their ideas and ideals to themselves, to the lamentable impoverishment of the national life. Not until the Revolution had broken down all distinctions was it realized how homogeneous France really was, and how ready for a unified national existence. In the religious life of England there are plentiful symptoms of a deep dissatisfaction with the unreal barriers which impoverish a divided

Christendom. May that dissatisfaction grow in volume and intensity, till it becomes irresistible!

Meanwhile the Churchman must begin with himself: and begin by revising his scale of values. His individual tastes, he must learn, are not of the first importance. If he has preferences for this piece of ceremony, that type of worship, and that kind of music, however legitimate those preferences may be, they are not the things that matter most. It is easy for a specialist in these matters to put the wrong end of the telescope to his eye, and to assume that because he has a telescope he is seeing clearly. But if he has really grasped the idea of the Church, he will have learnt to waive his personal inclinations and to put himself in the background: and while he will be frank in expressing his mind, he will be always ready to prefer the way of sacrifice to the way of wilfulness. The City of God is not built up by self-assertion: nothing that is built into it can stand, unless it is built on Him Who came not to do His own will, not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life for many, for their deliverance.

Therefore we may be sure that the "healthful spirit," drawing us away from every desire to seek our own comfort at the expense of the brotherhood, will guide us to make the utmost of our individual faith by putting it at the service of the Church. There is no element in religion, not even the most

intimate and personal, which will not flow out, if rightly used, for the helping of others. Prayer, the more it is practised, grows inevitably into intercession, and by the profoundest of mysteries *avails much in its working*. Reverence, the heart of worship, is magnetic: it will spread through a whole congregation from the entirely unconscious influence of two or three, gathered together not only in body but also in spirit. The mere fact of church-going is a service rendered, not only to God, but also to your neighbour. Your place is filled; your link in the chain holds the chain together. What you make real by your reality becomes easier for others to realize. It is a good thing to understand this and utilize it deliberately: by so doing it is possible to lift much of the routine of religious observance, so far as one's own purpose in it is concerned, to a plane far above the selfish; and to change the obligations of habit into an habitual sacrifice. To fail in them will then be to miss a happy chance of giving that little best which every single Churchman can contribute to the common stock: to fulfil them will bring with it the opportunity of learning that worship is an oblation, and that the true worshipper brings a double offering, giving what he can both to God and to his fellow-men.

From the communion of worship the communion of service follows necessarily. There must be almost nobody who is debarred altogether from taking any

part whatever in bearing the burdens of Church life. Yet our churches are full of people who are content to live on the outskirts, as it were, of the spiritual pastures which they frequent: ecclesiastical gipsies, wandering with unchartered freedom as inclination suggests; helped, it may be, often, but helping never. These are the despair of the parochial clergy. They own no responsibilities, and enter into no personal ties. The early Church, with its system of letters of recommendation, would not have tolerated the growth of such a class. There would seem to be no way of reducing its numbers except by intensifying corporate life to such a degree as might shame some such half-Christians into better ways. It will rarely be hard for any one to take some share in that process: whether by helping to bear, as laymen should, the load of financial anxiety, or by placing a definite amount of time at the disposal of the Church: by making it a point of honour to find out what needs doing, and being ready to do it, or simply by forming a part of that reliable backbone of the community which is always to be depended upon for anything that is going forward.

But besides the care which the true citizen will take to keep his own citizenship worthy of the *high calling*, there rests upon him an obligation to care for the whole body to which he belongs. *O pray for the peace of Jerusalem.* The spirit and tone of a great community like the English Church is the

resultant of the tone of its members, and of their attitude towards the whole. Leaders will effect little if the heart of the people is stagnant, if the people do not know their Church or care what it is becoming.

In what spirit then shall we pray that God's continual pity may cleanse and defend His Church? First of all I would plead for a broad, patient, and hopeful view of Christian history. As in the secular sphere the organization of life is still in its early youth, so in the sphere of faith the Gospel is still young. Nineteen hundred years is only a little time in the great period and shows but a small arc of the full circle. A Church that is being built for eternity should not make too much of centuries. The first seed of the Faith was sown on Eastern soil a few centuries ago: almost at once it was transplanted Westward, by a strange destiny. Ever since the beginning the Faith has belonged to the Western nations rather than to those among whom it took its rise. After these few centuries it is beginning, we trust, to convert the Western world; its task in the East is still, one may almost say, waiting to be begun. There is room for long views and much patience. And so when we consider the place of our Church in the world, its relation to other churches, its blemishes, its divisions, it is well not to judge hastily, that "as things have been, they remain." Rather we shall say, *It is mine own infirmity, but I will remember*

the years of the right hand of the Most Highest. On a short view of history it will be thought that the ideal of Christian unity has been shattered for ever by the logic of facts; those who have a broader horizon will believe that a truer Catholicism is on its way, too deeply rooted and too strongly built to feel the weight of such differences as divide us now: and they will pray for its coming.

On a short view it might seem that the failure of religion to touch and hold the great majority of our people were irremediable, as though materialism were bound for ever to crush out faith in all but a few: a wiser patience will be sure that the ebb and flow of the spiritual life of the world is too vast for easy generalizations, and will remember that the "sea of faith," if not full, is at least fuller than Matthew Arnold could have believed that it would ever become again. Let the English Churchman be patient, hopeful, distrustful of short cuts; and remember that the best service he can do to the Church of the future is to make the best use of every fragment of life that there is in the Church of the present.

Next, the lover of our Church's well-being will desire that it may gain in power, in the consciousness of power, and in readiness to use power. Stability we already have. We are not hysterical. Ever since we lost the bulk of the Puritans our strength has come mainly from that kind of Englishman who

loves to settle down, to do what he is accustomed to do, and not to be troubled too much by ideas. The fiery spirits have tended to go off from us at a tangent. If we do not stone the prophets, we lend but a stony ear to prophecy. It is good to be stable and solid, but that quality brings with it obvious defects. We are brought up on the story of the hare and the tortoise. The tortoise won the race, and yet we ought not to prefer a tortoise to a greyhound. It is not an inspiring animal, nor easy to inspire. We do in fact exhibit a lack of vital energy. New problems find us unready : old ones never get beyond the stage of compromise. New forces are unwelcome : we do not take kindly to the working of new leaven. So we lost the Methodists, and did our best to lose the Tractarians. Many a good man was driven over to Rome by the mere fact that there was no one in authority large-hearted enough to see that he had in him a real fire, burning smokily, it might be, but still the real fire that might kindle into a great revival. The bishops were too prudent : they were offered a heating apparatus, but preferred to be cold in order to escape the risk of conflagration. In our day—though I would not speak of particular problems except by way of illustration—we let ourselves imagine that we are short of candidates for ordination, we let our rescue work trickle where it ought to flow like a great river, we acquiesce in the legislative impotence of the Church, all for lack of

readiness to use the power that is there. Meanwhile the "Free Churches" are alive and alert, responsive to great calls, full of enthusiasm for missions, keen in the work of social redemption, ready for corporate action on great occasions. We need hardly spend our time in praying that our Church may be kept from premature innovation—its dangers do not lie in that direction: but we should surely pray for a healthful spirit of power to come among us like a breath of fresh air, bringing us courage, and initiative, and generosity: lest the power that is there be atrophied before it can be turned into energy. Down in Cornwall, by the side of deserted mine-shafts, lay great mounds of refuse, valueless, apparently, and cumbering the ground: then came energy and knowledge, divining hidden treasure, and worked at the inert heaps till they yielded what was already there, the magical energy of radium. We are not quite as inert as a heap of pitchblende: but we hide away, or fail to utilize, a greater power than that of radiant atoms.

Lastly, let us desire breadth and true freedom for our Church. Already in one sphere the tide is turning. For the greater part of the century a battle has been going on, in which it has been hard to see who the real antagonists were. It has been fought over an extended front, and there has been much smoke. The confusion is slowly clearing up: and now at last it is clear that the principle at stake was fairly simple,

and that many a combatant has fought against it by mistake, or on its side without knowing it. What matters most in the ordering of worship : the past or the present ; antiquarian principle, or edification ? That is surely the great question about which we hope soon to be at peace with one another. If we can solve it on the side of breadth, we shall have made a great step forward, not only towards allaying party strife within our borders, but towards a practical understanding with those by whom the Prayer Book at its best is felt as a restriction. *Let all things be done to edification* ; let all that really edifies be done. All the antiquaries on either side cannot discover a more radically Christian basis than that on which to settle, for instance, the question of incense or that of extempore prayer. That it is hard to apply, and may at times or for a time be incapable of direct application, is certain : but without some such broad, human principle at the root of policy we may hope in vain for stable peace. Devotion cannot yield to historical research as to a court of final appeal : the worshipping heart will never be convinced that the mind of the English Church was for ever expressed three and a half centuries ago, nor that what was included or excluded then was for ever barred or admitted. But a Church which really determines to build up the faithful, to be free in the progressive study of the art of worship, to learn from and with its pupils, will have not only the past behind it, but

the present with it and the future before it: and in satisfying with generosity the widely various needs of worshipping humanity, will be as strong as it is broad.

In another sphere a conflict even more complex is going forward. It is something greater than a conflict, indeed, though within it men range themselves on this side and on that: it is the whole movement of the Church towards an intellectual expression of the faith, the search for light, the attempt to find a home for the mind within the world of redemption. There too we must pray for breadth and freedom. It is becoming easier to do so, in proportion as we are learning that the work of the reasoning faculty in religious life, however vital and indispensable, is yet subordinate. It does not please God to save His people by logic. The reason which defines and distinguishes has a sphere of its own: it must, by reason of our finite apprehension, walk in half-lights, and see as in a mirror, in a riddle: and its work may be inadequate and faulty without doing vital damage to the inmost life which it attempts to express. Without love it is dead, and while love rules the will the aberrations of reason—so long as it is not arrogant and self-sufficient—will not kill the soul. Moreover, the Church as a body is still a disciple as well as a teacher. The Holy Spirit guides it into all the truth, but does not force truth upon it, nor present it with truth codified, and He will not do our thinking for us,

will not destroy the freedom of the disciple's mind any more than He will destroy that of the penitent's will. Meanwhile knowledge grows : and it is a hard task—part of the cross which the Church must bear—to welcome and assimilate the new without disloyalty to the old.

The Roman Church has taken what seems to be the simplest course. Her policy is to ignore the movement of the world in the supposed interest of the "faith of the millions." She legislates deliberately for the suppression of all inquiry, on a principle which is the converse of that of Gamaliel : "silence these men, for if this counsel be of God, what we overthrow now will some day be restored." The peril of this course is twofold : it absolves the central authority from the responsibility of intellectual effort, and so draws naturally into positions of power those who prefer not to think : and on the other hand by encouraging the growth of an unintelligent clergy it alienates and embitters men who have as much right to consideration as the less educated masses : it also rests upon the false assumption that the average man is not interested in religious thought. Hence came the tragedy of the Modernists. They set out with an honest desire to know truth and to help to win the minds of men for Christ, and they find that their Mother treats them as rebels. The men whom they seek to guide are hungry and thirsty : and when they ask for bread they are confronted by "Pius X, with a

stone in one hand and a scorpion in the other." Meanwhile the "faith of the millions" of to-day is being unfitted, by the action of its interpreters, to be the faith of the millions of to-morrow.

For our Church we may well hope better things. The principle of Gamaliel is a good guide in its original form: and Gamaliel's warning is aimed straight at those who would check the movement of the mind by repression. Haply they may be found to be fighting against God. It is after all the sceptic and the man of small faith who turns most readily for refuge to infallible authority and unprogressive theology: he cannot trust the guiding of a Spirit which is not despotic: like the man who would have God's revelation written large upon the sky, he would have truth indubitable stated in terms which leave no room for any act of the mind but submission. A sounder faith knows less of fear and shrinks from tyranny. It knows that freedom is the only soil in which truth can expand. *If this thing be of men, it will come to nought.* Honest inquiry, unchecked by any but its own laws, comes to honest results in the long run, while a cramped science moves by tortuous paths and is never sure of being true to itself. In the English Church it is a paramount necessity that the air should be cleared and kept clear of any tendency to resist, stifle, and deal disingenuously with the advancing life of knowledge: that laymen should be able to feel that the clergy,

while firmly rooted in the Faith, love knowledge, desire to spread it, seek it as a certain gain, and do not fear it as a possible danger. And while no one would desire that the Church in its corporate capacity should sway hither and thither with every gust of intellectual novelty, we shall feel that even occasional irresponsibilities on the part of individuals are more endurable and less damaging than a general torpor or hostility to light. So, to take an example out of many, there will be room to hope that the advance of Old Testament study will not be for ever without influence on the Church's use of the Bible in public worship: nor requirements made of candidates for ordination which are in their plain sense repugnant to the sincerity of most of those who comply with them.

After all, as in Church order, so in knowledge the Christian movement is not yet mature: it has unknown destinies of growth before it: and in respect of learning, which cannot ever do more than express in terms of reason that which is higher than reason and deeper than mind, we may confess with hope that

Our times are in his hand
Who saith, a whole I planned:
Youth shews but half: trust God, see all, nor be afraid.

In the *Shepherd* of Hermas, a book written to rebuke and stimulate the Christians of Rome nearly eighteen hundred years ago, there are visions of the

Church. She appears first as an aged woman white-haired, wrinkled, almost decrepit. She is old, Hermas learns, because in the counsel of God she was before the world began: she is the embodiment of the things which God then prepared for them that love Him. But in a second vision, though still venerable, she has changed: her old age is no longer that of failure and weakness: she is alert and clear of vision. And in a third, even the appearance of old age has passed away, and nothing remains but vigour and beauty and grace. The reason for these changes is asked: and the answer is that the change is not in the thing seen, but in the eyes and heart of him who sees it: as these are purified, so they perceive more and more clearly the beauty that was always there. So it is with the City of God. As first seen, from without, it is only the home of venerable traditions, a thing of the past, unrelated to the realities of to-day. A nearer view shows life still stirring in the ancient forms: and when seen with the eyes of one who walks its streets in devotion and service, the vision is transformed; in the place of the decrepit and aged figure we see one who, waiting on the Lord, renews her youth, and strides strongly forward into the future, in faith unwavering.

So may it be with the English Church, if her sons approach her so. If they come to her grudging and cold, they will find in her only what they bring to her: but if they bring their best, faithfully using the

gift that is in them, they will find in her not only the shrine of an ancient sanctity, and the guardian of a living tradition, but the school and mother of saints who are and are to be.

IX

THE CONTINUAL DEW

And that they may truly please thee, pour upon them the continual dew of thy blessing. Grant this, O Lord, for the honour of our Advocate and Mediator, Jesus Christ.

A GARDEN, says a great minor poet, is "the very school of peace." A garden is also the scene of unremitting and watchful conflict, where beauty and order and tranquillity represent the victory of purpose over wild nature. The gardener sets himself to give his flowers a chance, protecting them against the competition of ranker vegetable growths, with their animal allies. Nature is against gardens, and if the gardener is to win, he must bribe Nature to fight for him in the soil and air, and when this fails, he must keep Nature out. And all human peace is in some sort won by conflict and maintained by energy: it is never the triumph of inertia: it represents the victory of purpose over circumstance. Nature is against it. Peace in body and mind and soul is the outcome of active health, fighting to keep out the invading forces which, if they are allowed admittance, reduce us to worry, and morbidness, and discontent. The

peace which passes understanding has to be sought and kept by active and passive energies which can be practically directed by understanding. There is another type of peace which is just quiescence; Wordsworth depicts it:

Calm is all Nature as a resting wheel.

But the calmness of a life which has attained to peace is rather like that of a wheel in steady and balanced motion, perfectly doing its work; it is like that of the garden, where the life which issues in beautiful forms is allowed free play, and maintained in freedom, by ordered and purposeful effort.

Yet if constant conflict is the first law of life, the second is this, that effort cannot be continuous. We live by alternations of waste and repair. Even the strongest muscles, which appear to work on and on with unflagging vigour, trace, however slowly, the curve of fatigue. The bodily life is all periodic, demanding intervals of rest and recuperation. Nor is the life of mind and spirit any more continuous: not merely because "the earthly tabernacle weighs down the mind with its many thoughts," and the fatigue of the body communicates itself to the other powers: but because the mind itself has its own alternations of freshness and flatness, hunger and satisfaction: and these, working together with the rhythm of the body, combine to debar us from anything approaching continuous effort.

Here, then, is a problem. The best of life is not to be won without unceasing conflict, and yet the tides of life with their ebb and flow make unceasing conflict impossible. What is the solution?

It is to be found in the most natural way, by turning the law of alternations to good account and making it work on our side. There is a "blessed barrier betwixt day and day," and an equally blessed barrier between week and week: the longer stretches of work also have their limits for most people. *Man goeth forth to his work and to his labour*, until an evening comes, at the end of the day, the week, the term, the year: and at every recurrence of an interval in which we are not expected to give out anything, we can turn aside from action to another form of activity, building ourselves up, and co-operating with the healthful spirit in the work of rest, receptiveness, and repair. In the quiet spaces of life the "continual dew" descends: this metaphor does not belong to the heat of the day, but to its evening. On cool unclouded nights, when the earth is open to the stars, the dew will fall: so upon tired and anxious lives, when the demand of duty upon the active will is relaxed, and there is nothing between the soul and God, there falls the dew of blessing.

There is a natural barrier between day and day. The body is wise enough, if left alone, to live only one day at a time; and in sleep it is intensely,

though quietly active, repairing the waste of the past day's stress and strain. It does not borrow trouble from to-morrow, nor does it attempt, if nature is left to itself, to begin the next day just where it left off the day before, carrying over from the evening into the morning the staleness of yesterday's exhaustion. We, however, to whom our bodies belong, find it hard beyond measure to copy the body's wisdom. We live almost as much in the future as in the present, impede the course of to-day's work by anticipating the cares of to-morrow, and can hardly enjoy a day's fine weather for the fear of clouds and fogs to come. Further, the natural man, gravitating towards the line of least resistance, habitually takes up the thread of existence where he laid it down the night before. For him, in the life of his soul—if this be a life at all—there is no "blessed barrier," the

Dear mother of fresh thoughts and joyous health.

He goes to bed, gets up, dresses, and has breakfast ; and in this series of mechanical processes there is no room for even so much as a cold bath for the soul. Ungratefully he profits, in the physical refreshing which sleep brings to the brain, by the kindlier side of the alliance between mind and body : but of a purposeful use of this natural rhythm in the march of time he knows nothing.

The lesson of the "continual dew" is for us a clear

one: and yet every one who has had to deal either with his own soul or with the souls of others knows that it requires a great deal of learning. First comes the hard business of learning to live one day at a time. Without this we spoil our chance of quietude. If the day has been filled with over-anxiety, the heart will not easily be quiet when the chance of quietness comes. We cannot altogether "leave Now to dogs and apes." Now is the present opportunity; now is the moment to be redeemed: now is the only thing over which the will has power: it is impossible to do next week's duties or even really to face its perplexities now. *The morrow shall be anxious for the things of itself*: this is a hard saying, and of how many ills it contains the cure!

After this comes the equally hard business of reserving an interval of time somewhere between each day and the next, and turning it to good account. It is hard, but it becomes easier as its practical value is discovered, and a little experience suffices for that. Merely to banish worry by a strong effort of the will, and to enjoy a few moments of quietness before going to rest, is an excellent physical maxim for promoting healthy sleep; similarly in the morning, to secure a little time for exercise or fresh air before going out to work, makes all the difference to the body and mind when they come to grapple with the day's routine. It is like the air-lock through which the workers in a tunnel

have to pass before going on to breathe the compressed air in which their work has to be done. Even more certainly it is good that those who wish to live the life of faith and dependence should end and begin each day with an interval detached from practical affairs. As the noise of life recedes behind the closed doors within which we shut ourselves off to pray, think, and rest, we gain the chance of hearing quieter voices unheard during the greater and lesser agitations of the active hours.

The evening comes, the fields are still :
The tinkle of the thirsty rill,
Unheard all day, ascends again.

And the real values even of the active hours are better understood from a distance. At Niagara, standing close to the edge of the fall, little can be heard but the confused noise of the nearest waters : half a mile away the smaller partial sounds are lost, and the ear perceives, rather than hears, the immense deep diapason of the whole.

So, by secluding jealously a little island of time, evening and morning, for the eternal, it is not difficult to learn with what a freshness and serenity the changes and chances of the temporal day can be faced : and the lesson, once learnt, is not easily forgotten, however easily it may be neglected.

It is hardly necessary here to prescribe the ways in which this space of quietude should be employed, whether in prayer, or reading, or fixed and systematic

meditation. The vital thing is silence: an insulation of the self from all currents which might distract or over-stimulate. We need to remove ourselves absolutely from common pre-occupations, and to feel as clear a difference between the moments of devotion and those of action as we do between a church and an office. Both are good, and in both it is possible to serve God with the heart; but their functions are different. The Church's business is to stand open with a perpetual invitation to rest; it should be a place where nothing hostile to quiet is ever allowed to intrude; it should be as beautiful, and as sacramental through all forms of beauty, as art can make it. So too the reserved time of quiet, wherever it is spent, should be to a man's life what the ideal Church should be to the city.

Further, as there is a silence of the body, the will, and the mind, so also there is a deeper silence which is often the best of activity, and yet is little understood. It is of quite unsuspected value to take, even for a minute or two, a complete rest, not trying to pray or think, not even to wander in reverie, but remaining quite passive and quiet in the presence of God. Often when thought and prayer are impossible, this passive form of refreshment lies near at hand, and there are many who have found in it the best and most healing kind of devotion, not only for occasions of special weariness, but for the normal life of every day. The justification of this practice of spiritual

silence lies very deep down in our nature. It is clearly parallel to a law of physical life: namely, that when the body is allowed an absolute rest from conscious muscular effort, the vital energy works with freedom through the channels of reflex, unconscious activity, repairing and replacing tissue, calming and strengthening the nerves. So when the mind is hushed, the soul which is waiting upon God is not really idle, but the power of repair and refreshment works upon it freely through the channels of an activity lying quite below the surface of consciousness, deeper than words or definite expressible thought.

Words are but under-agents in the soul :
When we are grasping with our greatest strength,
We do not breathe among them.

It is possible that such quietude is not within the reach of all temperaments, though it is probably truer to say only that it is a habit which some people will acquire more easily than others. I would rather believe that every one has some power, however faint, to learn in pure receptiveness

the language of the heavens, the power,
The thought, the image, and the silent joy.

Day by day, then, we have to make fresh beginnings, "new every morning," through deliberate renewal at the source of freshness. The ending of the week brings a similar opportunity on a different

scale. Sunday is made for man, by the Church, and of all purely ecclesiastical institutions it is the most useful and by no means the easiest to use. Without wandering too far into general questions, it may be said that in settling the place which Sunday should take in life, it is well to begin at the right end. The common question whether golf, bridge, and picnics are right or wrong on Sunday is incapable of being answered directly, for the reason that it is not the first question to ask. The first question is, what Sunday is for, and whether there is anything which it is wise to secure and guard on that day; whether it gives us any chance which it would be a pity to miss. We are not now concerned to answer this question for the non-Christian; he will have his own maxims of expediency which are no one else's business, and he can only be appealed to, as a gentleman, not to interfere unduly with us and our ideals. But for the Christian the answer is fairly plain. For him the day bears a special stamp. It is the weekly Easter; it belongs to the brotherhood, it brings them together for collective worship and thanksgiving. Its special character is derived from the opportunity, and indeed the obligation which it brings, of offering the Eucharist in union with the brotherhood; and to this everything else is secondary. It thus stands to the Christian week as the time of prayer stands to the Christian day. It is the corporate time of quiet.

The first thing to be done, then, is to grasp the

value of the genuine Christian Sunday, and the next is to see that whatever we do we do not lose it. No scheme for the employment of this day is worth a moment's consideration for the Christian if it tends to rob him of a definite time of quietude and corporate worship. Modern life is so unceasingly active, so full, and often so small and narrow, that a man who cannot see that he needs periodically to be taken out of himself among the brethren, and to get well away from the rush of employment, is blind indeed. On the other hand, it is not likely that a man who is once really convinced of the essential thing in which the value of Sunday consists will have any serious moral difficulty in deducing from this the ways in which he will normally spend it. If he makes it a day of rush, and devotes it all to strenuous physical pursuits, his conscience will tell him that he has missed a good chance and will suffer for it. If he forsakes the "gathering of ourselves together," he damages both himself and the brotherhood, and need have no doubt whether he has done wrong. If he organizes his social pursuits so as to diminish the chances of a real Sunday for other people, guests or servants, if he allows his mind to dwindle away because he does not choose to rescue the one day on which he has a chance of reading something better than a newspaper, it ought to be quite clear whether he is making the best of the day, or not. On the other hand, when once the essential quiet has

been rescued, and the obligations of the Christian body cheerfully recognized, it will never be difficult to find room with a clear conscience for healthy employments. Difficulty only arises when we begin to wonder how far we can go in a direction felt to be that of laxity without doing wrong. Many persons, it would seem, for lack of really tenable principles, think of their Sunday as something which rather needs excusing: they are haunted by the ghost of the fourth commandment, and are glad if they can convince themselves that there is no harm in their habits. These have begun at the wrong end; they had much better be asking whether they care at all for the positive good which Sunday exists to bring to a noisy and hurrying world.

It may be worth while to suggest that a good Sunday begins on Saturday evening. The evening and the morning are the first day. To be prepared for Communion on Sunday morning is not easy unless the evening before has been quietly employed. Parents who are anxious about the religious habits of their sons might do worse than stipulate for a reservation of Saturday night in return for concessions in regard to Sunday afternoon. A cheerful essayist¹ pleads that the children's Sunday, especially at the seaside, should end at one o'clock. Even for grown-up people, a Sunday begun the night before would not

¹ E. V. Lucas, *Fireside and Sunshine*, p. 129.

infringe the spirit of the Christian idea if it were allowed to dissolve into freedom by the afternoon.

Remembering, however, that the tendency of the time is hostile, not only to the Sabbatarian, but also to the true spirit of Sunday, we shall always do well to speak respectfully of stricter views. It is a poor thing to apply solvents to other people's principles: *him that breaketh a hedge, a serpent shall bite.*

If it is of the essence of Sunday that it should bring us to a halt, that it should be of the nature of a restful evening, on which the *continual dew* will fall, we should surely be right in demanding that the Church should help to keep it quiet. Yet both in the arrangements of our worship and in the attitude of those who frequent it there is at present all too little of quietude. It is rightly urged against us that our services are generally too noisy and too continuous. Heartiness has its place, but it demands a great output of effort, and militates against the receptiveness which always belongs to true worship. We lose greatly by the separation from us of the Society of Friends. They are just the people who could teach us to be still, and wait, and listen to the inaudible, lessons which we greatly need to learn. Meanwhile, the worshipper who knows that worship is a high and beautiful art will seek out and prefer those services in which there is time for continuous and quiet prayer: in which the mind is not compelled to adhere too closely to the exact words of the rite, but may follow

quietly by itself, keeping in tune with the spirit of the worship rather than with the letter. It is greatly to be hoped that the development of our Church's worship—for surely there is room, and we have a right to hope, for real progress here, towards genuine and distant ideals—will move towards the creation of forms more ample, freer, and more restful than those of to-day. At present, the mind of the laity, over a large proportion of the Church, is simply enslaved to custom and impervious to ideals, as if we had already learnt all that worship has to teach us; whereas the truth is that we have not yet learnt how to meet the most elementary of our needs, that of a real parish service, uniting the whole of a congregation in the essential act of Christian worship, an act of general communion: nor have we all found out that it is wanted. And yet how much of the whole problem of Sunday really turns on this unsatisfied necessity!

One day in seven forms a "blessed barrier" between week and week, and rightly used should go far, at least for the laity, to redeem the flatness of Monday. But the long periods of active life need still further breaking up. Holidays and leisure should be of the essence of every labouring man's contract. Aristotle indeed says that "we work in order that we may have leisure," and Harnack,¹ himself the hardest of workers, holds that "labour is a valuable safety-valve, and

¹ Harnack, *What is Christianity?* Eng. tr., pp. 120, 121.

useful in keeping off greater ills, but it is not in itself an absolute good, and we cannot include it among our ideals. . . . As a matter of fact there is a great deal of hypocritical twaddle talked about work. Three-fourths of it and more is nothing but stupefying toil, and the man who really works hard shares the poet's aspirations as he looks forward to evening :

Head, hands, and feet rejoice : the work is done.

So most people inwardly feel, as the appointed period of labour draws to its close. But there are very few who realize that in their deeper life they become as tired and stale as in the routine of practical duty. The soul needs a rest and a break, and above all, a period of quietude. It is good to have holidays : it is also good, and far better than most people imagine, to go into what is technically called a retreat. The very same need which spurs us on to daily prayer and Sunday worship has an unsatisfied margin which accumulates as the months roll on. It becomes harder to get back to the simplest realities, and to see the purpose of life with sincere eyes. We come to need a time when we can be free from pre-occupation and distraction, free to "look before and after," and above all, free to be quiet. For the sake of mere efficiency, even, a retreat is of the utmost value. It clears the outlook, simplifies the will, directs the intention as no other experience can do. More than any other experience,

it comes close to the picture of the quiet and cloudless night of refreshing dew. Yet, I suppose, nine people out of ten in an ordinary congregation would think much sooner of flying than of making a retreat: imagining that to be silent even for a definite number of hours every day would be unendurable, whereas every one who has made the experiment knows that such silence, as soon as its novelty has passed off, is a blessing unminged.

In Belgium, we learn,¹ the bold experiment has been tried of inducing working men and women to try this form of rest-cure, which among us has been generally restricted to other classes. The movement has had very remarkable success. Men and women have flocked to the houses of retreat in thousands. "About 10,000 men made retreats in the various houses during 1907." "The men themselves do the recruiting, and a steady stream of visitors is kept up. The workman is reached by the workman." And though men come in reluctantly and begin by thinking the programme wearisome in the extreme, "yet the fact remains that the very men who, it may be, showed every sign of boredom at the beginning, and during the first and second day, are obviously sorry to leave the house on the morning of the fourth, and declare their intention of coming the following year." The results justify the process. Apart from the

¹ From an article in the *Hibbert Journal*, October, 1908, by the Rev. Charles Plater, S.J. The whole article is well worth study.

enormous social value of influences so profound, "that the men do undergo a deep spiritual experience will be evident to any one who has stayed in one of these houses of retreat, seen them at their prayers, listened to their conversation, and watched their after-lives. A kind of astonished gratitude is seen in their faces. They go forth with a work to do, and they set about doing it in a practical and resolute fashion." "The good effects are seen at once in the strengthening and tranquillizing of character. The retreat gives the men something to live for. It supplies . . . the fundamental social need, a background to life."

A background to life: character strengthened and tranquillized: a work to do, resolutely undertaken; here are the very fruits of the healthful Spirit. What might we not hope for if, under wise guidance, ten thousand working Englishmen could be drawn in one year even to wish for such a deepening and refreshment?

Life is worth living a day at a time, a week at a time, and a year at a time, with regular recourse, day by day, week by week, and year by year, to its source and centre. The best is there, and we must draw it thence, fresh for each natural period. We cannot make reservoirs of spiritual freshness; nothing can save us from the necessity of going back, deliberately and often, to the *fountains of living waters*. Therefore we may well ask "that we may

truly please thee, pour upon us the continual dew of thy blessing": continual, as each period of quietude returns. Without this, life is less than life: it becomes superficial, shorn of a whole dimension; we drop down to the level of "the automatus part of mankind, rather lived than living, or at least under-living themselves." But we are not meant to be automatus. We are called to freedom, and to know the depth and height as well as the length and breadth.

Whether we be young or old,
Our destiny, our being's heart and home,
Is with infinitude, and only there;
With hope it is, hope that can never die,
Effort, and expectation, and desire,
And something evermore about to be.

The mind habituated to look deeply into itself, and steadily towards God, gains, surely if slowly, in peace and serenity and depth of judgment, quick to discern eternal and not merely transient values. So we are meant to measure both men and things. A beautiful parallel to this depth and truth of vision is to be found in the mind of great men of science. Tyndall, walking and climbing in the Alps, had a keener eye by far than most men for visible beauty: no one has felt more deeply than he, nor written more perfectly, of the majesty of nature, whether in the "wild untamable ferocity of repellent crags," or in the "saintliness" and "immortal calm" of motionless clouds in a daffodil sky; yet wherever he goes,

you feel that he is discerning law and cause and order beneath and in things seen, and this not as a trick of pedantry, but as by a kind of second sight, a faculty trained by the discipline of observation and fed continually by the love of knowledge. The music of mountain streams, the forms of snow and ice, the shapes of clouds and vapour gathering and dissolving, have for him—and for his readers—a double charm, the charm of knowledge interpreting beauty, and loving the law which it discerns. Such a charm of beauty, knowledge and love belongs too to those who have gone far along the road in which St. John and St. Paul were pioneers, discerning truly both that which is on the surface of life, its length and breadth, and discerning also that which is not on the surface, its depth and height.

Them the enduring and the transient both
Serve to exalt : they build up greatest things
From least suggestions : ever on the watch,
Willing to work and to be wrought upon.

For those also who are at the beginning of this road a beautiful prospect opens ; but it will fade, unless they are willing, not only to work, but also to be wrought upon : open and sensitive to the guidance of the creating Spirit, and ever on the watch to learn, both in quietness and in activity, the way to knowledge, the truth of love, and the life of health.

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